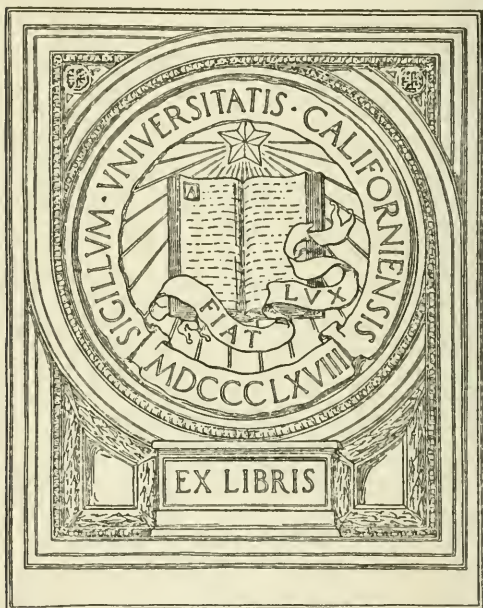
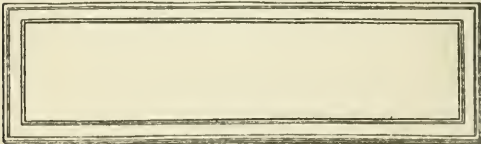




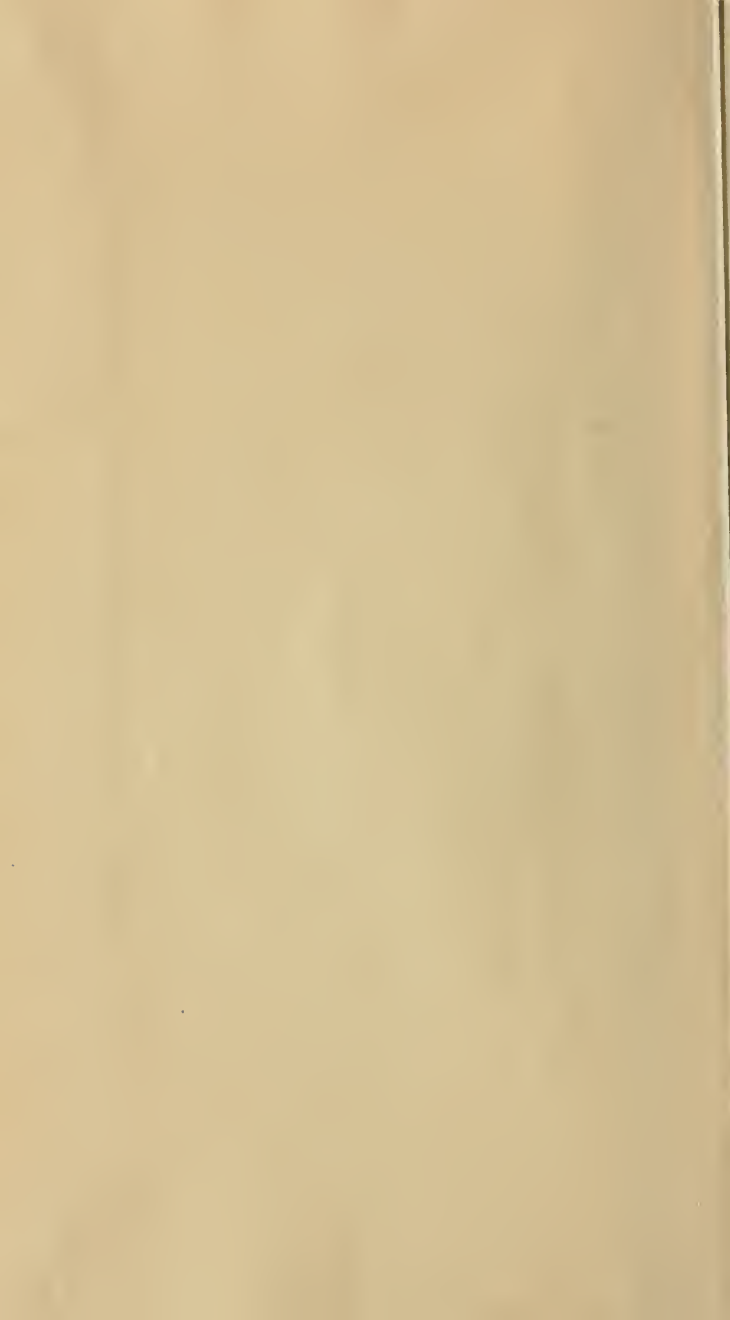
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THE PICTURES;  
THE BETROTHING.

Novels,

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

LEWIS TIECK.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR GEO. B. WHITTAKER,  
AVE-MARIA-LANE.

1825.

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PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS.



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Bishop ...

THE  
TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

Eugl

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Walker

A TALE ought never to stand in need of a preface or commentary. The best are those which are the most strictly national and in the highest sense of the word popular, which touch immediately the sympathies of the living generation, and display the common elements of our nature, the purely human, under the social relations most familiar to the author and the reader. For then essence and form are most intimately, because naturally and unconsciously blended; neither is exclusively studied, or sacrificed to the other. But even when it is the poet's endeavour, as it is often the highest exercise of his high vocation, to recall the image

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of the past with its individual peculiarities, to refresh the fading colours of an important, but half-forgotten period, to catch and raise the faint tones of an expiring tradition; when even his historical groundwork is fixed in a remote age and a foreign scene, still the tale ought to contain every thing necessary for it to be fully felt and understood within itself. It should not only be completely independent of any formal introduction or addition, but should even be able to dispense with the aid of those digressions and reflexions and elaborate descriptions, which are in fact only prefaces out of their place, or notes taken up into the text, and which sometimes disfigure even the best of our modern novels, and dispel the illusion created by the poet's genius, by taking us behind his magic lantern and shewing us the machinery of his art. This will apply in most cases to translations of such works. It may however sometimes happen, that a tale perfectly intel-

ligible and luminous in the circle of readers for which it was designed may to a different public seem obscure, or give occasion for misapprehension. Such is most frequently the case with those which belong most exclusively to the age and country of the writer, when he does not merely aim at exhibiting human nature clothed in the existing forms of society, but takes for his immediate theme the spirit and tendency of the times in which he lives, the principles and opinions, the tastes and the pursuits of his generation. In works of this nature many things will be taken for granted, many slightly alluded to, with which a foreigner is imperfectly, if at all, acquainted; the whole representation may wear a partial aspect, which, though in the society where it originated it may be sure of finding sufficient correctives, may elsewhere perplex and mislead.

The two little works here presented to the public fall within this exception to the general

remark, and the Translator felt that he should not be doing them full justice, if he were not to preface them with a few words of introduction. Their beauty it is true can hardly fail to strike even those who are least conversant with the state of things out of which they arose, and of which they exhibit several interesting sides, but still without some additional explanations every part might not be sufficiently clear to the English reader, and the whole might appear to him in a false light, and perhaps lose its highest interest and meaning.

Little more than half a century has passed, since Germany began to rouse herself from the state of lethargy which followed the convulsive struggles produced by the Reformation. She awoke, and found herself shorn of her strength, greatness and glory. The empire, reduced to the shadow of an august name, was hastening toward its dissolution. All sentiments of an enlarged patriotism were absorbed in particular

and provincial interests and prejudices. The very idea of national union seemed to be lost with the great national recollections. There was no feeling of pride in the past, no consciousness of a glorious inheritance to inspire hope and confidence in the future. The degenerate descendant walked among the mighty monuments of the power, the genius, the art and spirit of his ancestors, with stupid unconcern or contemptuous wonder. A German school of art, a German literature were things neither believed in nor desired; that they had ever existed was forgotten; the memorials of them were left to sleep among the neglected lumber of history. The attention and patronage of the great were engrossed by productions of foreign growth; above all the language, the literature and manners of France exercised a despotic sway over the higher and educated classes. The peculiar virtues of the German character, the native strength of the German

intellect, were slighted, concealed, and as far as possible suppressed, while the artificial graces of an exotic refinement were affectedly displayed, and became the only pass into good society. The well-bred mimics strutted in their borrowed plumes with all the vanity, though not quite all the ease of their originals, and prided themselves on their successful imitation, without perceiving how awkwardly the foreign frippery sat on them, and how their ungainly movements betrayed them at every step, and exposed them even to the polite ridicule of their masters. The principles and opinions which had long been prevalent in France, and now began to be loudly expressed and industriously disseminated every where, were very extensively diffused over Germany together with the literature by which they had been carried to their highest maturity and perfection. They were maintained speculatively and practically by some earnest and zealous advocates, and found a very strong predis-

position in their favour among the persons and classes who were most interested in opposing them, and who, having adopted and cherished and even ostentatiously displayed them as modish distinctions, afterwards, when the inconvenient consequences stared them in the face, began, with a dissimulation too gross and palpable to attain its object, publicly to discountenance and check them. In the meanwhile they exerted a powerful and pernicious influence on the great concerns of human life, morals, politics and religion. The reign of light, liberality and common sense was every where proclaimed; objects formerly deemed great, awful and holy, were brought down by ingenious accommodations to the level of ordinary capacities, and men were surprized to find how they had been abused by imposing names, when they saw what had once appeared to them too vast and mighty for the imagination to compass reduced to dimensions which they could so easily grasp.

Hopes were entertained, that an enlightened system of education might destroy the germ of such mischief for the future, and that it might be possible, if not in all cases to eradicate inveterate prejudices, yet to prevent the seeds of them from lodging in the breasts of the young, by suppressing the first feelings of wonder, faith and love; and that the rising generation, trained in the principles of a calculating morality, a cosmopolitan independence and a reflecting religion, might be effectually secured from the influence of all the bugbears and charms that had ever awed or fascinated the world.

But notwithstanding this false and unnatural tendency of the public mind, the prospect, though here and there clouded and threatening, was not absolutely cheerless and unpromising. The heart of Germany was still sound and entire, and the foreign cultivation, in spite of the activity with which it was conducted, could not



find a congenial soil. Even when the moral and intellectual imbecility and dependence were at their height, the great mass of the people remained uncorrupted and unperverted. The soul of poetry and the life of religion had retreated from the crown and topmost branches toward the root of society, and there, while the sere and many-coloured leaves trembled on the boughs, preserved the hope of a coming spring. Among the middling and lower classes, particularly in situations exempt from the contagion of courtly example, the faith, the traditions and the manners of former times flourished in happy obscurity, and in proportion as they were despised and rejected by the great and the refined were held dear by the common man, and kept his heart warm, his imagination fresh, and his life pure. Even about the middle of the last century the workings of a regenerating spirit began to appear. Some great writers then took the lead in German literature,

who, though themselves not wholly free from the influence of the age, yet in various ways contributed to counteract its prevailing tendencies, and to rouse and direct the dormant strength of their countrymen. Some penetrated into the deepest mysteries of Grecian art, and inspired a new, enthusiastic feeling for the beauties of classical antiquity. Some opened the treasures of many interesting but neglected fields of ancient and modern literature. Others exposed with irresistible subtilty and force of criticism, the spurious rules and blind imitations and hollow pomp of the French drama, so long an object of unsuspecting faith, and directed the public attention to the true classical and romantic models. The language itself, which in the preceding period had lost much of its grace, raciness and vigour, and had become at once weak and unwieldy, was carefully cultivated, and gradually formed into a worthy organ of high conceptions and deep specula-

tions. The next generation grew up under happier auspices. Shakespeare began to be known, felt and enjoyed in Germany, and the young and rising spirits of the age turned from the effete and lifeless literature of France, to contemplate the eternal freshness of nature and her favorite child. The new school of poetry which they formed, and which recognized no other guide than genius, truth and feeling, was perhaps partial in its tendency and indefinite as to its objects; it produced among much that was great and beautiful some morbid extravagances and wild exaggerations; but viewed as a state of transition it was both salutary and promising; it counteracted other much more dangerous and mischievous innovations of the age; it preserved many noble minds from the contagion of cold and heartless theories, and contained within itself the fruitful elements of a still more fortunate period.

The great political events which marked the

close of the century gave a new impulse to the mind of Germany. The principles and opinions which then manifested themselves with tremendous consistency in France had exerted a more or less noxious and disturbing force in the former country, but the violent crisis to which they led was there at least in the highest degree beneficial. It did not operate, as in some other countries, merely as a lesson of political experience, to regulate the external conduct of those who were interested in the maintenance of established institutions without altering their principles, and thus to produce a show of union and stability while the discordant elements continued to ferment in secret. In Germany the principles and doctrines which had become triumphant in France were subjected to the most free and vigorous discussion. The German spirit of philosophical speculation had never sunk into the dogmatical materialism of the French school. The monstrous caricatures ex-

hibited by the understanding, when relying on its unassisted powers it undertook to build the future on the destruction of the past, drew the attention of the deepest thinkers to the fundamental errors of the moral and political theory then for the first time brought into action. To avert its immediate practical consequences was left to the vigilance of the great and the steady attachments of the people. The more important intellectual struggle against the theory itself was carried on, in every direction and with every species of literary armour, by the most powerful minds which at this critical epoch were rising to maturity.

But the exertions of individuals, however highly gifted and even closely united, are never sufficient to effect any important and durable change in the temper of a nation. They are themselves borne along with the current of the age, and may see and announce, but cannot control its course. Even the most striking lessons of foreign expe-

rience are lost upon a people ; it gains wisdom and strength only by its own sufferings and actions. The moral and political regeneration of Germany was to spring out of the lowest depth of national calamity and humiliation. Under the hardest pressure of a foreign tyranny, which had grown mighty by their errors and distractions, and which applied its whole power, directed by a systematic and relentless policy, to destroy all the remains of their strength, all the links of their union, all the memorials of their greatness, the name of their country became once more dear to the Germans. They began to look back with affectionate reverence to its remote antiquity, to the early promise of its infancy, to the feats of its sportive and vigorous youth ; its history, constitution and language were investigated with an ardent and indefatigable interest ; the monuments and relics of its happier days were anxiously drawn out of the dust of oblivion ; every fragment connecting

the present with the past, which had escaped the general wreck, was attentively examined and carefully guarded. The masterpieces of native art once more received the tribute of admiration, which had been so long withheld from them and lavished upon foreign worthlessness; those which had been before known and unnoticed were more deeply studied and placed in new points of view; buried treasures were brought to light, and men began to perceive with surprize and joy the inexhaustible riches of the mine, the surface of which they had so long trodden without the hope of gaining from it more than a few sickly, exotic flowers. The national character and genius were contemplated in a spirit at once philosophical and patriotic; their peculiarities were observed and fostered; the popular feeling, which through all the variations of fashionable opinion had preserved its homely vigour and simple purity, was no longer disdained or suppressed; all its

signs and forms, its dialects and expressions, as it broke forth from time to time in poetry and tradition, were watchfully treasured. The Germans became proud of their country and their ancestors.

But with this feeling of exultation were mingled others of shame and repentance and despondency. Deeds of their own, a redeeming struggle, a trial of patience, fidelity and courage were wanting, to efface the inglorious recollection of the immediate past, and to inspire confidence and hope for the future. The ordeal was vouchsafed them, and the exercise of heroic self-devotion, of all the passive and all the active virtues, had reconciled Germany with herself, even before the arduous conflict had been crowned with its glorious success. When the intolerable yoke was at length broken, and the invaders were driven within their natural limits, the conquerors felt themselves worthy of their forefathers, and believed that all



errours might be retrieved and all losses repaired. An unbounded prospect opened before the eye of patriotism; and the energy which had already accomplished so much, the goodwill which had submitted to such trying tests, seemed capable of realizing the most lofty projects. The awakened consciousness of the nation found worthy organs, who announced in strains of prophetic eloquence its wants, its wishes and its destination.

But the enthusiasm, which, while its immediate object was before it, burnt with so pure, steady and beautiful a flame, displayed itself, after the first great work of deliverance was effected, in a variety of forms, and in some which were ludicrous, disgusting and possibly dangerous. It began soon to excite the jealousy of the governments, which had cherished it, and owed to it their independence and even their existence. Perhaps this jealousy, not always reasonable in its grounds or judicious in its

measures, may have contributed to occasion the extravagances in which it afterwards found new motives for precaution and restriction, by checking the active spirit which might have been usefully guided into proper channels, and thus forcing it to licentious and mischievous aberrations. The circumstances too which usually accompany all revolutions of public feeling, attended likewise on this. The spirit of the times always finds in different individuals various degrees of capacity for receiving and containing it. Those who are possessed by it instead of possessing it, are apt to attach great importance to outward badges and distinctions, to attribute to them a productive power, and to substitute them for that which can alone give them value as signs and indications of its existence. These externals, which satisfy the indolent and amuse the weak and superficial, become the ready instrument and mask of imposture. The strong and glowing language,

which in such seasons of general excitement gushes in a living stream out of the inmost depth of really inspired bosoms, is echoed by the imbecile without meaning, and by the designing with selfish views. Thus things in themselves innocent and even commendable become first contemptible and then suspected; the most genuine expressions of the purest and warmest feeling are profaned and abused, till they sink into unmeaning or equivocal commonplace. All this happened in Germany. In the first effervescence of patriotic rapture several violent and premature innovations were introduced or attempted in things of no moment, except so far as they are the natural and unforced expression of the inward character which produces them and by them is brought to light. Efforts were made to return to the dress, language and manners of a former age, by those who did not reflect that, until the spirit of the past had penetrated the whole mass of society,

it was neither practicable nor desirable that any great change should be wrought on its surface ; that it was in vain to think of improving the physiognomy without altering the disposition. The consequence was, that this imitation instead of becoming a popular habit remained a fashion confined to a few, and exhibited a strange and ludicrous contrast with that which it was meant to supplant. The fifteenth and eighteenth centuries brought side by side only put each other out of countenance.

A similar superstition displayed itself in the cultivation of the arts, particularly that of painting. The great works of the native masters, in which Germany is so rich, were deservedly admired, but they were not always studied in the same spirit in which the great Italian artists of the fifteenth century profited by the works of their predecessors. The new German school, though it has to boast many productions of genius, too often betrays by man-

ner, affectation and caricature, its dependent and arbitrary origin. Those who least understand their models cling to the surface with indiscriminate imitation, and copy and even exaggerate defects. Their extravagances seem to justify the aversion of those who are equally partial in an opposite direction, and widen the breach between the classical and romantic schools. The conflict of opinions thus produced, intimately connected as it is with the other phenomena of the day, forms an important feature in the intellectual face of Germany, and the description of it has been woven by the author, with inimitable art and an irony that never relaxes its impartiality, into the texture of the first Novel.

One of the consequences of the vicissitudes and revolutions which Germany had undergone was the revival of religious feeling. In the last century, partly from internal causes, partly from the influence of foreign manners

and opinions, it had every where begun to languish, and had been almost entirely banished from the higher and educated classes. But the disasters and reverses of so many eventful years had subdued the irreligious levity, so little congenial to the German character; the very excess of calamity which seemed to have extinguished hope, had awakened a faith which gained strength even from despair. The war too which rescued Europe from the last and most imminent danger of an universal monarchy, was in Germany essentially a religious war. It was neither the desire of revenge nor of glory, nor even of liberty itself as the ultimate end, which nourished the enthusiasm there excited; the feeling which animated all the leading spirits, and which operated instinctively on the least reflecting, was the conviction that they were engaged in the highest and holiest of causes; that the moral, as well as the political regeneration of Europe depended

on the issue of that struggle. The deliverance itself was so greatly beyond hope, so rapid and complete, and attended by so many wonderful and striking circumstances, that it was hailed rather with gratitude as an interposition of Heaven, than with triumph as a victory achieved by human strength. The newly kindled religious fervour broke forth in various directions, and produced some remarkable and interesting changes. Individuals who could not find satisfaction for their religious cravings in the communion to which they belonged sought it in another. Religious societies separated from each other by slight distinctions made approaches to a closer union; those divided by an insurmountable barrier cherished and maintained more warmly than ever their distinguishing peculiarities. A new life seemed to be infused into the old observances of Catholic devotion, and the spirit of Protestant piety strove to display itself in new forms.

Religion became a great public and private concern; every question relating to it excited a lively interest; every method of diffusing it was deeply studied and sedulously practised.

This good however came not unalloyed. Those in whom the religious feeling was least genuine, those who had merely caught it by contagion from others, were, as usual, the most anxious to make it prominent and conspicuous. They thought they could not exhibit too striking a contrast to the sceptical indifference and irreligious frivolity of the former age in their language and deportment. Piety, which is of a retiring nature, seldom conscious of her own actions, and never wishing them to be observed, was forced against her will into all companies upon all occasions, was made to occupy the foremost place, to study attitudes and gestures, to think aloud and deliver herself in set terms. A new kind of spiritual dialect came into fashion, and threatened to



infect the whole tone of conversation and literature. It was not precisely the cant which with us is the property and badge of certain religious sects, and which to unaccustomed ears is either ludicrous or disgusting; it was a more refined compound of mysticism and sentiment, rather cloying from excess of sweet, but not without a charm for the young and inexperienced, and very easy to be caught by habit or learnt from design. In the endeavour to exclude from society all symptoms and tokens of the freethinking age, the moral taste grew alarmingly squeamish, and began to reject the most wholesome food as savouring of profaneness. As the freedom of Shakespeare scandalizes our sectaries, so among the circles, in which religion was most the mode in Germany, the unconstrained and unaffected purity of Göthe began to pass for licentiousness.

We are indeed ourselves very far gone in this distemper, and value ourselves on our superior

delicacy, because we cannot see without a blush what in times less refined was not supposed to need a veil, as none suspected it could ever raise an impure thought.

Another mischief not less formidable sprang from the same cause. It is the tendency of all enthusiasm to concentrate all the powers and feelings of the soul in its single object. Religious enthusiasm, the most intense as its object is the highest, is of all the most jealous and exclusive, and can least bear any participation in its sovereignty over the thoughts and affections. Hence wherever it has been strongly excited, whatever bears the name or is allied to the nature of amusement and diversion has been proscribed, not so much on an ascetic principle of mortification, as sensual indulgence, but because it is thought to distract the attention from the great business of life. We are still suffering under a like effect of the puritanical spirit, the traces of which will perhaps never

be effaced from our national character. Under its dominion the lower orders were deprived of their innocent and invigorating sports, and forced to supply their place by noxious stimulants, drawn first from the conventicle and afterwards from the alehouse. The pleasures of the higher classes are of a more intellectual kind; their most refined entertainments are derived from the fine arts and elegant literature. But when the productions of literature and art are considered as diversions, they are levelled before the eye of religion with the sports of the vulgar; they are perhaps less harmless, as they cost much more time and ingenuity in the production, and exercise a more powerful influence over the mind. From this point of view there is no essential difference between a puppet-show and a play of Shakespeare; only the one is a pastime for children, the other for men; a panorama is a source of amusement differing in degree only,

not in kind, from a cartoon of Raphael; the former has the advantage of affording more general entertainment. A map or sea-chart are greatly superior to either, for they contribute to the practical purposes of life. But when religious feeling is very strongly excited and imperfectly regulated, art, literature and science, stand all alike in contrast with the realities of religion; and as empty fictions, worldly shows and illusions sink equally into nothing. Few men rise above this point of view. To perceive the real dignity of the arts and their intimate connexion with what is highest in human nature, with religion itself, requires both a vivid sense of beauty and a reach of speculation very rare and difficult to attain. In England the former is perhaps more common than the latter; the arts are seldom estimated at their real worth. Those who pursue amusement as the business of life, value them as they minister to that end; those whose

thoughts are engrossed by religion, reject them altogether as toys and vanities; many think it allowable to indulge in them, provided it be coolly and soberly, as innocent diversions; a more numerous party, which thinks itself by far the wisest, would reconcile the two extremes, and ennoble these recreations by making them vehicles for piety and morality.

A similar feeling of hostility and contempt towards the arts, not indeed so extensively diffused as under the reign of our Puritans, but still sufficiently marked and striking, accompanied the revival of the religious spirit in Germany. In some instances it was produced by an intensity of zeal; in the greater number it proceeded from coldness of imagination and incapacity for philosophical reflexion. It may perhaps have been strengthened by a cause peculiar to that country. Every one at all conversant with the modern German literature has been struck by the frequent recurrence of

that which, till a better term shall be coined for it, may be called the esthetical view of things. It is that view which regards them not as true or false, nor as good or bad, but merely with reference to art as possessing or wanting beauty. This view, the prevalence of which has been referred by Frederic Schlegel to the influence of Winkelmann over his countrymen, is on some subjects peculiar to German writers. It has been frequently applied by them, with the happiest result, as a corrective to the partiality of the moral and historical views, which, exclusively pursued, must often lead into the grossest errors. But perhaps it has itself sometimes been allowed to predominate, and been carried with an intemperate license into subjects connected with religion. Even where this was not the case its introduction may have alarmed honest prejudices, and seemed to endanger the simplicity of faith and the fervour of devotion.

At all events this is one of the causes which has there contributed to widen the unfortunate breach between religion and the arts.

To expose these and the various other false tendencies, perversions and exaggerations of religious feeling in Germany, for all of which, when a slight allowance is made for the difference of national manners and characters, the reader will be at no loss to discover parallels at home, is the Author's design in the second of these Novels. No man was better qualified for this undertaking than one who, living almost wholly in a poetical world, has never ceased to keep a watchful eye on the fluctuations of opinion and feeling among his contemporaries. To him too it peculiarly belonged to apply a corrective to the now prevailing extravagances, who formerly attacked, with satire the most powerful perhaps to be found in modern literature, errors and follies of an opposite description, and contributed, at least as efficaciously

as any writer in Germany, to produce the moral revolution, of which this volume exhibits the dark side. It is this that gives a peculiar charm to the homage which he incidentally pays to Göthe, a charm indeed inevitably lost on the English reader; but to one who has marked the progress of these two great poets, their singular diversity of genius and the seeming divergency of their course, this tribute of veneration under such circumstances has in it something beautiful and almost affecting. The passage in other respects is unhappily as intelligible to the English reader as any in the volume; here too Göthe had scarcely acquired a partial celebrity before he was attacked on similar grounds, with perhaps as much sincerity and certainly not less scurrility. In the execution of his delicate task, the Author has displayed the temper and spirit befitting a theme, the treatment of which, without the nicest impartiality, might be mischievous or



offensive. In the midst of the keenest ridicule and the warmest glow of feeling he preserves an ironical self-possession, such as only a consummate artist can command. The keeping is every where perfect; the living scene is presented to us rather in a mirror than a picture.

Though these two little works, especially the latter, are occasional and even polemical in their origin, they have a value quite independent of the temporary effect they may produce, not only as possessing a sort of historical interest from the view they afford of a remarkable period, but as nearly perfect models of composition in their kind. It is one of which we can hardly be said to have a specimen in our literature. We have indeed two or three names for prose works of fiction, but the chief difference between them is one of quantity. The novel is only a longer tale, or the tale a shorter novel. Even in Spanish or Italian literature it would not be easy to find an ex-

act parallel; for the *novelas* and *novelle* are in general only circumstantial anecdotes. The name however adopted from them by Tieck has been retained, though as applied to a work of less than three volumes it has now become obsolete. The peculiarity of these Novels is the dramatic concentration, the compression of all the elements which compose them within the smallest possible compass, within which they can fully expand and display themselves. It is the most common fault even of the ablest writers to exceed or fall short of that compass, and both faults are often committed in the same work; some of the component parts are left undeveloped, others dilated to an arbitrary extent. The exact medium is the highest mystery, and its attainment the greatest triumph of art. It is this which, among the many admirable things in the present volume, is perhaps most worthy of admiration. The variety and originality of the characters here

introduced would under any circumstances be remarkable, but it excites peculiar surprize and delight, that in so small a space they find room to act so freely and to shew themselves so fully. There are enough of them to furnish richly as many novels of the modern size, yet, had the Author indulged his fancy in multiplying situations and weaving new intrigues for neverso many volumes, they could not have stood before us more clearly and distinctly, with more of life and nature. They have been scarcely an hour in our company before they become old acquaintance; we should know no more of them if we were to hear the whole history of their lives.

But to point out the Author's merits was not the object of this Preface, which has already grown to what may appear an inordinate length. The Translator wishes he could have believed it altogether superfluous, and will not add to it anything which he knows to be so.

Indeed he thinks himself fortunate in not being obliged to vindicate the morality of these Novels. For with us this is esteemed, not only by most well-disposed readers, but by almost all our periodical critics great and small, a very essential point in a work of fiction, and it is therefore usual for a novel-writer, who wishes to secure their approbation, to indicate, either in the title or at the conclusion, the branch of morality to which his work is to be referred. But the best German writers have some strange notions on this subject; they believe that a tale may have a high value, though its moral essence cannot be extracted in a precept or an aphorism; they even think it the better for having no didactic object, and Göthe goes the length of saying that a good tale can have none. Such being the case, it would not have been surprizing if in these Novels the moral lesson had been somewhat obscure, and had required some ingenuity to deduce. The

Translator then has reason to congratulate himself, that it is as obvious and striking as if the Author's main end had been to convey it, and that he has even been spared the trouble of construing it. He will therefore no longer detain the reader from better company.



## THE PICTURES.

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“HAVE the goodness, Sir, in the meantime to step into the picture gallery,” said the servant as he let young Edward in; “my master will come to you directly.”

With a heavy heart the young man entered.

“With what different feelings,” thought he to himself, “did I once pace through this room with my worthy father! It is the first instance of my descending to such a step as this, and it must be the last too. That it really must! And it is time for me to take a different view of myself and the world.”

Setting down a covered picture against the wall he advanced farther into the room. “How a man can have patience with these lifeless pictures, and exist in and for them alone!” so he continued his silent medita-

tions. "Does not it seem as if these enthusiasts lose themselves in a realm of enchantment? For them art is the only window through which they catch a glimpse of nature and the world; they have no means of knowing either except as far as they compare them with their copies. And yet so it was that my father too dreamt his years away; whatever was foreign to his collection gave him no more concern than if it had fallen out at the pole. Strange how enthusiasm of every kind tends to confine our existence and all our feelings!"

At the moment he raised his eye, and was almost dazzled or startled by a picture that hung in the upper region of the lofty saloon without the ornament of a frame. A girl's head with delicately tangled flaxen locks and a playful smile was peeping down, in a light undress, one shoulder partly bare, which looked full and glossy; in her long tapering fingers she held a fresh-blown rose close to her ruddy lips. "Now really," cried Edward aloud, "if this is a picture of Rubens, as it must be, that glorious man surpassed all



other masters in such subjects! That lives! That breathes! How the fresh rose blooms against the still fresher lips! How softly and delicately do the hues of both play into one another, and yet so distinctly parted! And that polish of the rounded shoulder, the flaxen hair scattered over it in disorder! How is it possible that old Walther can hang his best piece so high up and without a frame, when all the other trash glitters in the most costly decorations?"

He raised his eye again, and began to comprehend what a mighty art is painting, for the picture grew more and more instinct with life. "No, those eyes!" he said again to himself, entirely lost in gazing; "how could pencil and colour produce any thing like that? Does not one see the bosom pant, the fingers and the round arm in motion?"

And so it was indeed: for at the instant the lovely form raised itself, and with an expression of roguish playfulness flung down the rose, which flew against the young man's face, then drew back and shut the little window, which rung as it closed.

Startled and ashamed, Edward picked up the

rose. He now clearly remembered the narrow passage above, which ran parallel to the saloon, and led to the upper rooms of the house : the other little windows were hung with pictures ; this only had, to gain light, been left as it was, and the master of the house used often from this spot to survey the strangers who visited his gallery. " Is it possible," said Edward, after he had called to mind all these circumstances, " that little Sophia can in a space of four years have grown such a beauty ?" Unconsciously and in strange distraction he pressed the rose to his lips, then leaned against the wall, his eyes fixed on the ground, and did not observe for some seconds that old Walther was standing by his side, till the latter, with a friendly slap on the shoulder, roused him from his reverie. " Where were you, young man ?" said he joking ; " you look as if you had seen a vision."

" So I feel," said Edward ; " excuse me for troubling you with a visit."

" We ought not to be such strangers, my young friend," said the old man heartily ; " it

is now upwards of four years since you have entered my house. Is it right that your father's friend, your former guardian, who certainly always meant well by you, though we had at that time some differences, should be so totally forgotten?"

Edward blushed, and did not immediately know what to answer. "I did not suppose that you would miss me," he stammered out at last, "much—every thing might have been otherwise; but the errors of youth——"

"Let us drop that subject," cried the old man gaily; "what prevents us from renewing our former acquaintance and friendship? What brings you to me now?"

Edward looked downwards, then cast a hasty transient glance at his old friend, still hesitated, and at last went with lingering step to the pillar where the picture was standing, and took it out of its cover. "See here," said he, "what I have found unexpectedly among the property left me by my father; a picture that was kept in a book-case which I had not

opened for years. Judges tell me it is an excellent Salvator Rosa."

"So it is!" exclaimed old Walther, with enthusiasm in his looks. "Ay, that is a glorious prize! A happy chance to light upon it so unexpectedly. Yes, my dear departed friend had treasures in his house, and did not know himself all he was master of."

He set the picture in the right light, examined it with beaming eyes, went closer, then back again, pursued the outlines of the figures from a distance with the finger of a connoisseur, and then said, "Will you part with it? Name your price, and if it be not too high the picture is mine."

In the meanwhile a stranger came up, who had been taking a drawing after a Julio Romano in another quarter of the gallery. "A Salvator?" he asked with a somewhat sarcastic tone, "which you have really found among the heir-looms of an inheritance?"

"Certainly," said Edward, cavalierly surveying the stranger, whose plain frock and

simple air gave him about the appearance of a travelling artist.

“ You have then been yourself imposed on,” answered the stranger in a haughty rough tone, “ if it be not your intention to impose on others ; for this picture is evidently a pretty modern one, perhaps is quite new ; at all events not above ten years old ; an imitation of the master’s manner good enough to deceive for a moment, but which on closer inspection soon betrays its baldness to a connoisseur.”

“ I cannot help feeling surprised at this presumption !” exclaimed Edward, entirely losing his self-command. “ In the collection my father left behind him were none but good and original pictures ; for he and Mr. Walther always passed for the best judges in the town. And what would you have ? In the shop of our celebrated picture-dealer Erich there hangs the pendant to this Salvator, for which a traveller a few days ago offered a very large sum. Let them be compared together, and it will be seen that they are works of the same master, and fellows.”

“ So !” said the stranger with a drawling tone, “ you know then or are acquainted with that Salvator too ? It is to be sure by the same hand as this, that admits of no doubt. In this town originals by that master are scarce, and Messrs. Erich and Walther do not possess one ; but I am familiar with the pencil of that great master, and give you my word that he never touched these pictures, but that they are productions of a modern who wants to impose upon amateurs by them.”

“ Your word !” cried Edward colouring deeply ; “ your word ! I should think that mine might pass here for just as much, and more.”

“ Certainly not,” said the Unknown ; “ and I have moreover to regret that you allow your warmth to surprise and betray you so. You are privy then to the fabrication of this counterfeit, and know the imitator, who is not an unskilful one ?”

“ Sir,” cried Edward still more vehemently, “ you must make me satisfaction for this affront ! These pretensions, these falsehoods which you vent so boldly, are signs of a detestable character.”

Privy-counsellor Walther was in the greatest perplexity that this scene should take place at his house. He stood examining the picture, and had already convinced himself that it was a modern but capital imitation of the celebrated master, such as might deceive even an experienced eye. It pained him to the heart that young Edward should be entangled in this bad affair; but both the antagonists were so violently irritated, that all mediation had become impracticable.

“What is that you are saying, sir?” cried the stranger, himself now raising his tone; “you are beneath my anger, and I am glad that accident has led me to this gallery to protect a respectable collector from imposition.”

Edward foamed with rage.

“That was not the intention,” said the old gentleman, making an attempt at pacification.

“It was assuredly the intention,” proceeded the stranger; “it is an old stale trick, which it has not been thought worth while even to face with a new invention. I saw at the picture-dealer’s that so-called Salvator; the owner

thought it genuine, and was confirmed in his belief when a traveller, who by his dress seemed a man of high quality, offered a large price for the picture : he meant to call again on his return, and begged the dealer not to let the piece go out of his hands for a month at least. And who was this distinguished personage ? The discarded valet of Count Alten of Vienna. Thus it is evident that the trick, whoever may have been the contriver, was played off against you, M. Walther, and your friend Erich ”

Edward in the meanwhile had with trembling hands wrapped his picture in its cover again ; he gnashed his teeth, stamped, and cried, “ The devil must play me this trick ! ” So saying he rushed out, and did not observe that the maiden was looking down again from above into the saloon, to which she had been drawn by the vociferation of the quarrellers.

“ My worthy sir,” said the old man, now addressing the stranger, “ you have distressed me ; you have been too hasty with the young man ; he is heedless and extravagant, but I have never yet heard of his playing a foul trick.”



“ One must always be the first,” said the stranger with cool bitterness ; “ he has at all events paid to-day his scholar’s fee, and will either reform or learn the necessity of managing his matters more prudently, and in no case losing his temper.”

“ He has certainly been imposed on himself,” said Walther, “ or has really found the picture as he says ; and his father, who was a great judge, laid it by for the very reason that it was not genuine.”

“ You wish to put the best face on the matter, Sir,” said the stranger ; “ but in that case the young man would not have been so indecently violent. Who is he, pray, after all ?”

“ His father,” so the old gentleman’s story ran, “ was a rich man, who left behind him a large property ; he had a passion for our art of an intensity of which few men certainly are capable. He devoted to it a great part of his fortune, and his collection might justly be called incomparable. In his attention to it however he neglected rather too much, it must be

owned, the education of this his only son; hence on the old man's death the youth thought of nothing but spending his money in the company of parasites and low people, and keeping women and equipages. When he came of age he had enormous debts to pay to usurers and on bills, but he set his pride in increasing his extravagance; the pictures were sold, for he had no taste for them; I took them at fair prices. He has now, I believe, pretty nearly run through every thing except the house, which is a handsome one, though that too may perhaps be encumbered with debts; knowledge he has scarcely acquired any; employment is insupportable to him; and so one cannot help seeing with concern how he is advancing towards his ruin."

"The every-day history of numbers," observed the stranger, "and the common course of a paltry vanity, that leads men gaily into the arms of dishonour."

"How have you been able to acquire so sure an eye?" inquired the counsellor. "I am astonished too at the style of your drawing

after Julio Romano, since you say you are no artist."

"But I have long studied the art," answered the stranger; "I have viewed with some diligence, and not without profit, the most important galleries in Europe; my eye is naturally keen and accurate, and has been improved and rendered sure by practice; so that I may flatter myself that I cannot easily be deceived, at all events on the subject of my favourites."

The stranger now took his leave, after having been forced to promise the collector to dine with him the next day, for the old gentleman had conceived a great respect for the traveller's accomplishments.

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In unspeakable anger Edward returned home. He went furiously in, banged all the doors violently after him, and hastened through the great rooms to a little back parlour, where, in the twilight, sat old Eulenböck, with a glass of generous wine by his side, waiting for his coming. "Here!" cried Edward, "thou old wry-nosed,

wine-burnt scoundrel, is thy daub again; sell it to the soap-boiler up the street, and let him melt it down into his vat, if the painting does not suit him."

"A pity that for my good little picture," said the old painter, pouring himself out another glass with perfect coolness. "Thou art warm, darling; so the old man would have nothing to say to the bargain?"

"Rogue!" cried Edward, flinging the picture violently away; "and on thy account I am become a rogue myself! Affronted, insulted! Oh, and how ashamed of myself, my face and neck all of a glow from top to bottom, that for thy sake I should have permitted myself such a lie!"

"It's no lie at all, manikin," said the painter, as he unwrapped the picture; "it is as genuine a *Salvator Rosa* as I ever painted. Thou hast never seen me at work upon it, and therefore canst not know who the author is. Thou hast no dexterity, my little simpleton; I ought not to have trusted thee with the business."

“ I will be a man of honour !” cried Edward, striking the table with his fist ; “ I will become a steady man, and be once more respected by others and myself. I will become quite another creature, I will enter on a new course of life !”

“ Why put thyself out of temper ?” said the old man, renewing his draught. “ I will not hinder thee ; I shall rejoice to see the day. I have always, thou knowest, warned thee and lectured thee ; I tried too to accustom thee to work ; I wanted to initiate thee in the process of restoration, to teach thee to prepare varnishes, to grind colours, in short, I have left no stone unturned for thy benefit.”

“ Dog of a fellow !” cried Edward, “ was I to become thy journeyman, thy colour-grinder ? But in truth I sunk to-day deeper still, when I let myself be used as a knave’s knave !”

“ What derogatory expressions the lad makes use of !” said the painter, sniggering in his glass. “ Were I to take such things to heart, here had we forthwith tilting or bitter feud. But he means well for all his warmth ; the youngster has something noble in his character ; only as a

picture-dealer, to be sure, he is good for nothing."

Edward laid his head on the table, from which the painter hastily wiped a slop of wine away, that the youth might not dip his sleeve in it. "The dear good Salvator," he then said thoughtfully, "is supposed himself not to have led the best of lives; they even charge him with having been a bandit. When Rembrandt gave himself out for dead in his life-time, in order to raise the price of his works, he did not quite adhere to truth neither, though he died in reality some years afterwards, and so had only miscalculated a little. Suppose then, I, in all love and humility, paint a little piece like this, and gently and gradually identify myself in fancy with the old master, and all his delightful peculiarities, so that I feel as if the spirit of the dear departed guided my hand and pencil, and the thing is then finished, and affectionately winks to me its gratitude, for having executed another piece of the old virtuoso, who after all could not do every thing himself, nor live for ever, and I now, especially after a glass of

wine, inspecting it with more profound attention, convince myself in right earnest that it actually is a production of the old master, and so hand it over to another lover of his, and desire only a fair recompense for my pains, in having let my hand be guided and my own genius suppressed for the time, to the detriment of my own reputation as an artist:—Is this then an offence, my darling, that cries to Heaven, to sacrifice myself in this child-like simplicity?”

He raised the recumbent head, but changed his grin of good-humour into a gravity equally distorted, on seeing the cheeks of the youth full of tears, which were gushing out of his eyes in a hot incessant stream. “Oh, my lost youth!” sobbed Edward; “oh, ye golden days, ye weeks, and years! how sinfully have I squandered you away, as though there lay not in your hours the germ of virtue, of honour, and of happiness; as though this precious treasure of time were ever to be redeemed. Like a glass of stale water have I poured forth my life and the essence of my heart. Oh!

what a state of being might have opened on me, what happiness for myself and others, had not an evil genius blinded my eyes! Trees of blessing were growing and spreading a shade around me and over me, in which a friend, a wife, and the afflicted, might have found help, comfort, home, and peace; and I, in giddy wantonness, have laid the axe to this grove, and must now endure frost, storm, and heat!"

Eulenböck did not know what sort of face to make, still less what to say; for in this mood, with such sentiments, he had never seen his young friend before. At last he was glad to escape observation, and to be able snugly to empty his bottle.

"Thou art bent then on becoming virtuous, my son?" he began at last; "Good again. Verily few men are so inclined to virtue as myself, for it requires a keen eye to know even what virtue is. To act the niggard, and force people to lie in the face of God and man, is certainly none. But whoever has the true talent that way is sure to find it. If I help a sensible man to a good Salvator or Julio Romano of my own



hand, and he is pleased with it, I have at all events done a better action than if I were to sell a blockhead a genuine Raphael, of which the dolt does not know the value, and at the bottom of his heart would take more delight in a tricky Vanderwerft. My great Julio Romano I must sell in person, since thou hast neither the gift nor the luck for this kind of adventure."

"These wretched sophistries," said Edward, "can operate on *me* no longer; that time is gone by, and thou hast only to take care they do not detect *thee*; for with the uninitiated indeed the attempt may succeed, but not with judges such as old Walther."

"Let me alone, my little darling," said the old painter; "the *judges* are precisely the best to cheat, and with a raw novice I should not even wish to try the experiment. Oh! that good old dear Walther, that sharp little man! Didst thou not see that fine Höllenbreughel that hangs on the third pillar between the sketch of Rubens and the portrait by Vandyke? That is mine. I went to the little man with the picture. Have you a mind to buy a fine

piece? ‘What!’ cried he, ‘such mad freaks, such fooleries? That is not in my line; however, let us see. Well, in general I do not take in such absurdities; but as in this picture there is rather more grace and design than one commonly meets with in these vagaries, I will for once in a way make an exception.’ In short he kept it, and shows it to people to display his comprehensive taste.”

“But wilt thou,” said Edward, “never turn honest man? It is surely high time.”

“My young doctor,” cried the old man, “I have been one long. Thou dost not understand the thing, nor art thou with all the warmth of thy outset yet at the goal. When thou hast reached the mark, and happily passed all rocks, bars, and beacons, then boldly beckon to me, and I perhaps may shape my course after thee. Till then let me alone.”

“So then our career of life is parted!” said Edward, viewing him again with a look of kindness; “I have let slip much, but yet not all; I have still a part of my property, my house, remaining. Here I shall quarter myself plainly,

and endeavour to procure a place as secretary or librarian to the prince who is expected here shortly, perhaps I may travel with him; perhaps elsewhere a fortunate chance—or if not, I confine myself to this spot, and seek employment in my native town.”

“ And when dost launch into this life of virtue?” asked the old man with a grin.

“ Immediately,” said the youth; “ to-morrow, to-day, this hour.”

“ Nonsense !” said the painter, shaking his grey head; “ for all good things a man must allow himself time, must make preparation, take his vantage run, close the old period with a solemn rite, and in like manner begin the new one. It was an admirable custom of our ancestors, in some districts, to celebrate the exequies of the carnival with a fit of pure genuine extravagance, to let their spirits once more run wild at the end of the holidays, and surfeit themselves with mirth, that they might afterwards indulge their devotion uninterruptedly, and without the slightest scruple of conscience. Let us observe that worshipful custom; I have a yearning, dost see, towards thee,

my little pet; give us and thy mad humours once more a right choice carouse, a solemn farewell dithyrambic, that thou mayst live in our memories, especially in mine; let us be joyous over the best wine till late in the night; then thou turnest off to the right to virtue and discretion, and the rest of us stay on the left where we are."

"Guzzler!" said Edward smiling, "so long as thou findest but a pretext for getting drunk, all is well with thee. Let it be then on Twelfth Night."

"That is still four days off," sighed the old man, draining the last drop, and then silently retired.

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"We shall have a little party to dinner to-day," said counsellor Walther to his daughter.

"Indeed!" said Sophia. "And will young Edward come too?"

"No," answered her father. "How comes he into your head?"

"I was only thinking," said Sophia, "that you might perhaps wish to make him some amends, by an invitation, for the disagreeable

scene which he was forced to go through against your will in your house."

"To-day," replied the old gentleman, "would of all days be the least suitable, for the very man by whom the youth was affronted is to dine with us."

"Ay! he?" said the maid, with a lengthened tone.

"It looks as if you had a dislike to this stranger."

"An exceeding one," cried Sophia; "for in the first place, I cannot bear any body when one does not know exactly who he is; this incognito is a dear pleasure in a strange place, to make a man pass for something extraordinary when he has precisely nothing at all to conceal; and such is no doubt the case with this Unknown, who has all the appearance of a chamberlain or secretary out of place, and gave himself yesterday in your gallery the airs of a superintendent-general of all the missionary institutions."

"You said, in the first place; now then in the second place?" asked the father smiling.

“ In the second place,” said she laughing, “ he is a horrid creature ; and in the third place, he is intolerable ; and in the fourth place, I hate him heartily.”

“ That is indeed first and last with you women,” said the old man. “ There will be besides my friend Erich, and the young painter Dietrich, and that strange creature Eulenböck.”

“ There we have all ages together,” cried Sophia, “ all kinds of taste and modes of thinking ! Does not young Von Eisenschlicht come too, to spoil completely the comfort of my life ?”

The father raised his forefinger threateningly ; however she would not be put out, but went on volubly and pettishly : “ It is true, I have no enjoyment of my life in their company ; there is such chattering and ogling, such gallantry and false compliments, each making the other more intolerable, that I should like a three days’ fast better than such meals. These innamoratos set my teeth on edge like unripe currants ; every word they say leaves a tart taste

in my mouth for a week, and spoils my palate for all better fruit. I like the old crook-nosed copper-faced sinner the best of them all, for he at least has no thoughts of transferring me like a piece of furniture into his study."

"This humour of yours," said the father, "is a defect in yourself that annoys me, indeed really concerns me; for, considering the stubbornness of your temper, I can see no chance of an alteration in you. You know my sentiments on the subject of marriage and love as it is called, how happy you would make me if you would subdue your will—"

"I must see to the kitchen," cried she suddenly: "I must do you honour to-day; only do not you forget your good wines, that Eulenböck may not give your cellar a bad name." So saying she ran out, without waiting for an answer.

The old gentleman went to look after his affairs while his daughter superintended the preparations for the table. She had broken off the conversation so suddenly, because it was her father's wish, with which she was but too well

acquainted, to marry her to his friend Erich, who, though no longer a young man, was not so far advanced in years as to render the scheme ridiculous. Erich had acquired a considerable fortune in his business; he was at this moment in possession of a collection of first-rate pictures of the Italian schools, and Walther proposed that, if his daughter could be brought to consent to the match, Erich should then retire from business, and incorporate these first-rate pictures into his gallery, that his son-in-law might possess and preserve it, distinguished as it would thus become, after his death: for he dreaded the thought of this excellent collection being some time or other again dispersed, perhaps even sold at an under-price, and thrown away on men in whose hands, from want of judgment, the pictures might go to ruin. His passion for painting was so great, that he would at all events have bought his friend's pictures at a very high price, had not the purchase of a considerable estate and a large garden, which he wished to leave to his daughter, prevented him, and rendered any outlay, but especially



to such an amount, impracticable. As he was writing his letters these thoughts were continually diverting his attention. He then bethought himself of the young painter Dietrich, a handsome light-haired youth; and though his style of practising his art was as little to his taste as that of his dress, he would still have been glad to embrace him as his son-in-law, because he was convinced that the young man would cherish the highest reverence for his intended bequest. Old Eulenböck could not enter into his thoughts with a view to his plans; but since the day before he had viewed the stranger connoisseur with an eye of paternal affection, and hence the petulant answer in which his daughter had expressed herself about him gave him so much dissatisfaction. He would not own it to himself, but his thoughts, when he looked into futurity, were bent much more towards the preservation of his gallery than the happiness of his child. Even young Von Eisenschlicht, the son of an usurer, would have been acceptable to him as a son-in-law, for the young man's taste had been tolerably cultivated

in his travels ; and as he possessed at the same time his father's propensities, there was good ground to expect that he would, from every consideration, treat so valuable a collection with respect.

Thus passed the forenoon, and the guests dropped in one after the other. First of all the youngest, Dietrich, in what is called the old German costume, his flaxen hair flowing down his shoulders, and with a short light beard which did not disfigure his ruddy transparent face. He immediately made anxious inquiry after the daughter, and she appeared, in a dress of green silk, which gave a surprising relief to the brilliance of the face and neck. The young man, with a manner at once embarrassed and pressing, immediately began a conversation with Sophia, which grew the more dry, the more transcendent he endeavoured to make it. They were interrupted, to the comfort of both, by the appearance of old Eulenböck, whose brown-red visage peered oddly out of a pea-green waistcoat and whitish frock, he being, as is often the case with decidedly ugly men, fond

of dressing in glaring colours. The young folks could hardly stifle a laugh at seeing him wheel awkwardly in, pay his respects with a grimace, and stumble in an unsuccessful attempt at politeness, while his gestures rendered his wry face, little sharp eyes, and twisted nose, the more conspicuous in their oddity. The stranger made the company wait for him a long while, and Sophia again rallied his presumption in playing the man of consequence, till at last he appeared, plainly dressed, and enabled the party to proceed to the dining-room, where they found Erich, who had been hanging a picture there which the stranger and the painters were to inspect. Sophia sat between Erich and the stranger, though Dietrich had made an unavailing attempt to wedge himself in by her side. Eulenböck, who observed every thing, and was never so well pleased as when he could wrap his malice in the disguise of good-nature, squeezed the young man's hand, and thanked him with seeming emotion for having cruised about so long merely to sit by the side of an old man who, it was true, also loved and practised the art, but still

with his declining powers could no longer emulate the flight of the new school, though its enthusiasm rekindled his old fire, and warmed his chilled spirits. Dietrich, who was yet young enough to take all this in earnest, did not know how to express gratitude enough, nor to put forth modesty sufficient to counterbalance this humility. The old rogue was delighted with the success of his irony, and continued to open the heart of the good-natured youth, who already fancied he saw a scholar of his own in this old tyro, and thereupon began secretly to calculate how he should employ his practical knowledge for higher ends, without letting the veteran perceive that his new teacher was at the same time his scholar.

While these two were thus trying to deceive each other, the conversation of the stranger and his host had fallen, accidentally on the one side, and by judicious management on the other, on the topic of matrimony; for old Walther seldom let slip an opportunity of delivering his sentiments on that subject. "I have never," said he, "been able to coincide with the views which for now nearly half a

century have become a general fashion. I call them a fashion, because, though I too have been young in my time, I could never convince myself that they were founded in nature. Is it possible to deny that some men are liable at times to passionate moods and excesses? We have but too frequently been forced to perceive the evil consequences of anger, drunkenness, jealousy, and rage. So it cannot be denied that a variety of mischief and strange catastrophes have sprung from those exaggerated feelings to which we give the name of love. The only question is as to the absurdity of which men are guilty when they avoid all other distractions, and seek to wean themselves from their subjection to sudden impulses of passion, while nevertheless for some time past it has become a common boast, and has been considered even as necessary to life, to have experienced love, and its wild moods and passionate distractions."

The stranger looked at his host seriously and nodded assent, whereupon the old gentleman proceeded with a raised voice :

“ Should one after all be disposed to make

some degree of concession, and admit that there is something natural in the moods of these lovers, in which, as they tell us, the whole world appears to them in a more beautiful light, and they are conscious of their powers being heightened and multiplied (though in general during that waking dream they are sluggish and incapable of labour), what, I ask, avails all this, supposing it even to take the happiest turn, towards concluding a rational good marriage? I would never give my consent were I to have the misfortune to observe this sort of infatuation in my daughter."

Sophia smiled; young Dietrich looked at her with a blush, and Eulenböck kept drinking with great satisfaction, while the stranger gravely listened to the old man, who, sure of his point, went on with so much the more zeal: "No; happy the man who, a total stranger to this preposterous passion, conceives the rational resolution of entering into the wedded state; and blest the maid who decorously finds a husband without having ever acted with him those scenes of frenzy; for then results that

content, that quiet, and blessedness, which was not unknown to our forefathers, but which the modern world thinks beneath its notice. In those marriages, which were contracted after rational deliberation in humility and quiet resignation, the men of former days experienced, in growing confidence, in increasing tenderness, and reciprocal indulgence for each other's infirmities, a happiness which appears too trivial to the present arrogant generation, and it therefore rears in the garden of life no fruits but wretchedness and want, discontent and misunderstanding, discord and contempt. Early habituated to the intoxication of passion, they seek the same in wedlock, and despise the necessary duties of ordinary life, renew their love-tricks at every turn in reiterated variations which have constantly less and less of novelty, and so are lost in worthlessness and self-delusion."

"Very bitter, but true," said the Unknown, with a thoughtful air.

"It is with this as with all bitters," whispered Sophia, "they fall too heavy on the palate; one

cannot rightly distinguish whether it is a taste, or whether it only deadens all taste ; such things are of course true for one who likes them."

Eulenböck, who had also heard this remark, laughed, and the father, who had only half caught what had passed, addressed himself gaily to his unknown guest: " We are agreed then that none but marriages of convenience, as they are called, can be prosperous ; and I shall never hesitate to give my only daughter, who will not be portionless or poor, to a man, whatever be his rank, whose character I esteem, and whose acquirements, particularly on the subject of the arts, I have reason to respect, that my grandchildren may still reap the fruits of my industry, and that the treasures which have been collected in this mansion by love for the arts, self-denial, study, and indefatigable diligence, be not scattered to the four winds, and over the houses of the ignorant."

He looked at the stranger with a complacent smile ; but the latter, who till now had graciously met his advances, put on something like a scowl, and said after a short pause: " The



collections of private persons can never subsist long; a lover of the arts, if he has made a collection, should sell his treasures at a fair price to some prince, or embody them by his will in some great gallery. For this reason I cannot approve of your plan with regard to your daughter, though I agree with you in your views of matrimony. And in any case marriage is an affair full of risk. If I were not engaged, and compelled by a thousand urgent motives not to break my word, my inclination would lead me never to marry."

The old gentleman coloured and hung his head, and soon after began a conversation with his neighbour on another topic. "The late auction of engravings," said the picture-dealer, "has not turned out so productive by a great deal as the owner anticipated." "That is frequently the case with auctions," said the daughter, briskly throwing in her word; "no man therefore ought to meddle with them who is not driven to it by extreme necessity."

Dietrich was yet too inexperienced to perceive the connexion of this dialogue; he declaimed

sincerely and warmly on the barbarism of auctions, in which the most precious rarities are often overlooked, many works damaged by the gapers and understrappers, and the reputation of great masters, as well as the feelings of their genuine admirers, receive painful shocks. By this he won the good opinion of the father, who brightened up and gave him a gracious assent. Sophia, afraid perhaps that a new proposal was to be brought forward under cover of enthusiasm for the arts, hastily asked the young painter whether he should soon have finished his picture of the Virgin, or whether he meant first to complete his Descent from the Cross.

“ You too then paint subjects of this pathetic kind ? ” asked the stranger, casting across at the young man a somewhat oblique glance from beneath half-closed eyelids. “ I can never overcome my surprise that men in their best and most cheerful years can waste their time and imagination on such subjects. We have I should think Holy Families enough in our galleries, it is a field in which there is no room for a new invention ; and those corpses

and distortions of agony are so wholly repugnant to all grace and enjoyment of sense, that I can never help turning my eyes away from them. It is the business of the arts to heighten and cheer our existence, to make all its wants and all the wretchedness of the world vanish at their approach, and not to vex and rack our fancy with their productions. The sensible world ought to play in a fresh cheerful light, and with its gentle attraction soothe, and in that way elevate us. Beauty is joy, life, vigour. The man who seeks night and gloomy feelings has acquired yet small knowledge of himself. But you perhaps are one of those who, at the sight of pictures of this sort, force their religious faith into raptures, and require a species of devotion to be kindled in us, that we may understand the subject and appreciate it with christian feelings?"

"And would that then," cried Dietrich with a degree of haste and vehemence, "be a thing so unheard-of, or even singular? In the beautiful, when in its appearance the idea is realized, the attraction of the sensible world as-

sumes a higher, a divine character, and thus the awe and pity which in uninspired souls want a voice and an interpreter, are exalted by the mediation of art into heavenly devotion. It is to be sure absurd, though excusable, when a wretched picture enraptures the believing spectator, merely on account of its pious subject; but it is to me perfectly inconceivable how a feeling heart at the sight of the Maria di Papa Sesto at Dresden can resist an impression of faith and devotion. I am well aware that the recent efforts of modern artists, among whom I own myself enlisted, have given great offence to many excellent people, but it is time to let passion subside, and to admit that the old track is quite broken up and become impassable. What in fact was the object of those who first revived the modern doctrine but to rekindle the feelings, which had long been considered as quite superfluous in all productions of art? And has not this new school already produced much that is respectable? A spirit, it cannot be denied, is manifesting itself, which will

strengthen and improve. A new road has been discovered, which will, it is true, as is the case in every period of enthusiasm, be trodden by many uncalled aspirants, whose productions will be exaggerated, offensive, and in every respect censurable. But is then the bad of this age worse than the creations which some time ago raised Casanova to celebrity? or the empty emptier than that cold copying of the misunderstood antique, which gives the whole of the last age the appearance of one great botch in the history of the arts? Were not quaint mannerists even then the phenomena of promise? And could the Association in aid of the arts, respectable as were its founders, bring forth one vigorous production?"

"Young man," said the stranger with the most cutting coolness, "I ought to be ten years younger, or yourself older by some few, to engage in dispute on a subject of such importance. This new fantastic dream has taken possession of the age, that indeed cannot be denied, and must now be slept off to the waking. If those whom you find fault with

were perhaps too sober, the men who are now extolled are on the other hand labouring under a morbid excitement, from a little weak beverage having mounted into their heads."

"You would not dispute," cried the young painter, "and you do more, you are bitter. Passion at all events takes from a man his freedom of judgment. Whether the party for which you contend with such weapons will gain by it, the future must decide."

Sophia had the malice to cast an encouraging look at the young man. Walther was by this time uneasy; but Erich joined in the conversation as mediator, and said, "Whenever a violent controversy stirs itself in the age, it is a sign that some truth lies midway between the parties, of which a contemporary, if he would be impartial, ought not to be entirely ignorant. The arts had long withdrawn from the business of life, and had become a mere article of luxury; it was in the mean time forgotten that they had ever been connected with the church and the world, with devotion and the spirit of enterprise, and all that was left to

produce them was cold connoisseurship, partiality for petty details and the common-place natural, and an artificial enthusiasm. I well remember the time when the finest works of a Leonardo were pointed out only as remarkable and singular antiquities ; Raphael himself was admired only with a qualifying criticism, and people shrugged their shoulders at still more ancient great masters, and never viewed the paintings of the earlier German and Flemish artists without laughter. This barbarism of ignorance at least is now gone by."

"If only no new and worse barbarism had arisen to supply its place!" cried Eulenböck, purpling deep with wine, as he threw a fiery glance at the stranger. "I never cease to regret that in our days the language of a genuine connoisseur is scarcely any longer to be heard ; enthusiasm drowns the voice of judgment ; and yet nothing is so instructive for the artist as a conversation with a genuine lover of the arts, to inform and animate him, though it is an advantage which for years together he may not be fortunate enough to enjoy."

The stranger, who seemed to be losing his temper and growing violent, became after these words again cheerful and mild. "Artists and lovers of art," he answered, "ought always to court each other's society, in order to be constantly learning of one another. So it was in former times; and this was another cause of the flourishing state of painting. The imagination of every inventor is confined, and flags if it be not refreshed and enriched from without, and this can only be done by means of judicious friendly suggestions, not to mention what is gained in point of correctness, gracefulness in the management, and taste in the selection of subjects."

"You have chosen," answered the old painter, "for the principal object of your study, an artist whom I myself love in a measure above all others."

"I confess," said the stranger, "that I have devoted my heart to him perhaps somewhat too exclusively. It was my good fortune early in life to become acquainted with and to understand some distinguished works of Julio



Romano ; in Mantua, on my travels, I met with an opportunity of studying him, and since then I think I am able to justify my predilection."

"Undoubtedly," rejoined the old man, " your stay there will have been one of the brightest epochs of your life. I have been forced of late years, to my intense disgust, to hear a great deal of blame thrown upon that great genius, chiefly for not treating sacred subjects with a due degree of fervour. All is not given to every one ; but the sublimation of a vigorous animal life, the free range of frolic wantonness, the play of the liveliest of imaginations, were things reserved for him. And if the heart of the youthful pilgrim is still closed against the exuberance of this brilliant genius, let him bend his steps to Mantua, there, in the Palazzo del T., to learn I might almost say all the glories heaven and earth comprize in them ; how radiant amid the terrors of the fall of the Titans is yet the revelry of joy and mirth, how glorious, in the saloon of Cupid and Psyche, amid the drunkenness of rapture, the heavenly appearance of perfect beauty."

Young Dietrich had for some time past been opening his eyes at their full stretch upon his apostate adherent; he could not comprehend this defection, and determined in a familiar moment to come to an explanation with the old man upon the subject; for though he might let the admiration of Julio pass, yet the first half of the conversation seemed to him to be in direct contradiction to Eulenböck's previous language, who however gave himself no concern about these trifles, but with the stranger amateur talked himself into so lively an enthusiasm, that for a long time they neither listened to the rest nor allowed them to put in a word.

Erich thought he observed a likeness between the stranger and a relative of Walther; this led them into the chapter of likenesses, and the way in which certain forms repeat themselves in families, often most distinctly in the most remote ramifications. "It is singular too," said the host, "that nature often proceeds just in the manner of art. If a Netherlander and an Italian of the elder school had to paint the same portrait, they would both seize the like-

ness, but each would produce quite a different portrait and quite a different likeness. So in my youth I knew a family consisting of several children, on all of whom was stamped the physiognomy of their parents, and a single leading form, but under different modifications, as clearly and distinctly as if the children had been portraitures of the same subject drawn by different great masters. The eldest daughter was as if painted by Correggio, with delicate complexion and slender form; the second was the same face, only larger and fuller, as if from the Florentine school; the third looked as if Rubens had painted the same portrait in his manner; the fourth like a picture of Dürer; the next like a work of the French school, showy and full, but indistinct; and the youngest like one painted in the liquid style of Leonardo. It was delightful to compare these faces, which with the same forms were so different again in expression, colouring, and lineaments."

"Do you remember that singular portrait," asked Erich, "which your old friend possessed

in his collection, and which with so many other things has been lost in so inexplicable a manner?"

"Ay, to be sure," cried old Walther; "if it was not from the hand of Raphael, as some assert, it was at least by a first-rate master, who had successfully studied the art after his model. When some moderns talk of the art of portrait-painting, as if it were something trivial or even degrading to a painter, they need only be taken to this admirable work to be shamed out of their opinion."

"How say you," inquired the stranger, addressing himself with animation to the old Counsellor; "were other remarkable pictures lost beside this excellent piece? In what way?"

"Whether they are lost," said Walther, it is impossible precisely to say; but they have disappeared, and have perhaps been sold and transported far away abroad. My friend, Baron von Essen, the father of the young man whom you lately met in my saloon, as he advanced in life grew humorsome and eccentric. Love of the arts was the basis of our friendship,

and I may say I enjoyed his entire confidence. Our great pleasure was in our collections, and his at that time far surpassed mine, which I have been enabled to enlarge so considerably only by the thoughtlessness of his son. Whenever we wished to give ourselves a real treat, we seated ourselves in his cabinet, in which his choicest works were collected. He had set them in particularly splendid frames, and ingeniously arranged them in the most advantageous light. Beside that portrait there was an incomparable landscape of Nicholas Poussin, of which I have never seen the fellow. In a soft evening light, Christ is sailing with his disciples on the water. The lovely reflection of the houses and trees, the clear sky, the transparency of the waves, the noble character of the Redeemer, and the heavenly repose that hung over the whole, and almost dissolved the soul in melancholy and peaceful aspiration, are not to be described. By its side hung a Christ with the crown of thorns, by Guido Reni, of an expression such as since then I have never seen again. My old friend,

among his oddities, would in general allow that excellent artist perhaps too little merit. But this picture always threw him into raptures ; and indeed one seemed every time one saw it to see it for the first time ; a familiar acquaintance with it did but heighten the enjoyment, and still discover new and more refined beauties. That expression of mildness, of patient resignation, of heavenly goodness, and forgiveness, could not but penetrate the most stubborn heart. It was not that state of intense passion which one sees in other similar pictures of Guido, and which, in spite of the excellent treatment of the subject, is rather repulsive than attractive, but on the contrary the sweetest while it was the most painful of pictures. Through the delicate fleshy parts beneath the cheek, chin, and eye, one saw and felt the whole skull, and this expression of suffering only enhanced its beauty. Opposite was a Lucretia, by the same master, plunging the dagger with a strong full arm into her beautiful bosom. In this picture the expression was great and vigorous, the colouring incomparable. A Holy Mother withdrawing

the cloth from the naked body of the sleeping child, and Joseph and John gazing on the sleeper; the figures, large as life, were represented by an old Roman master, so nobly and gracefully as to baffle all description. But well might I seek words to give but a faint conception of that matchless Van Eyck, an Annunciation, which was perhaps the crown of the collection. If colour ever appeared in its glory as a daughter of heaven, if there ever was a play of light and shade, in which the noblest emotions of the soul were awakened; if delight, inspiration, poetry and truth and dignity of character, were ever fixed in figures and colouring upon canvas, it was done in that picture, which was more than painting and enchantment. I must break off, not to forget myself. These pictures were the principal; but a Hemling, a magnificent Annibal Carracci, a little picture of Christ among the soldiers, a Venus, perhaps by Titian, would have been well worth mentioning, and there was not a piece in this cabinet which would not have made any lover of the arts a happy man. And, imagine, conceive the sin-

gularity of the old gentleman ; a short time before his death all these pieces disappeared, disappeared without leaving a trace behind. Did he sell them ? He never answered this question, and his books must have afforded evidence of the fact after his death, but they contained no reference to it. Did he give them away ? But to whom ? One cannot help fearing, and the thought is heart-rending, that in a sort of raving melancholy, because he would not resign them to any other man on earth, shortly before his death he destroyed them. Destroyed them ! Can you conceive, is it possible for a man to form an idea of so dreadful a distraction, if my conjecture is well founded ?”

The old man was so agitated that he could not restrain his tears, and Eulenböck drew an immense yellow silk handkerchief out of his pocket, to dry his dark red face with theatrical pathos. “ You no doubt remember,” he began sobbing, “ that singular picture of Quintin Messys, in which a young shepherd and a girl were represented in a strange dress, both admirably executed, and of which the old gentleman



used to maintain that the figures looked like his son and your daughter." "The likeness was at that time striking," answered Erich; "but you have still forgotten to mention the St. John, which might at least vie with the Guido. It was perhaps a picture of Dominichino, or at least was extremely like his celebrated one. The eye of the youth upraised towards heaven, the inspiration, the longing, and at the same time the melancholy, that he had already seen the divine person on earth, had embraced him as a friend and understood him as a teacher, this reflexion of a past epoch on the mirror of his noble countenance was affecting and elevating. Ah! a few of these pictures might save the young man, and restore him to opulence."

"All would certainly be lost upon him," cried Eulenböck. "He would only squander it away again. What warnings have I not given him! But he does not listen to an old friend and the voice of experience. Now at last that the waters perhaps have come into his soul, his spirits sink within him; he saw that I was affected even to tears at his misfortunes, and

solemnly promised me to amend forthwith, to work, and to become a regular man. When upon this I clasp him in an affectionate embrace, he tears himself from me laughing, and cries; but it is only from Twelfth-night that this resolution is to hold good, till then I am determined to be merry, and to go on in the old course! Say what I would, all was in vain: he threatened, if I did not let him have his will, to give up the reforming scheme altogether. Well, well: the holiday will come in a few days; the delay is but short; but at all events you may see from this how little his good resolutions are to be built on."

"He has always," said Sophia, "been too closely surrounded by pious people; from a spirit of contradiction he has turned himself to the other side, and thus indeed his wilfulness has prevented his intercourse with the virtuous from being of service to him."

"You are right in some degree," cried the old painter. "Has he not for some time past suffered himself to be besieged in a manner by the puritan, that tiresome old musical director

Henne? But I assure you, that man's dry sermons cannot possibly take a hold on him; besides, the old fellow grows fuddled at his third glass, and so travels out of his text."

"He has carried things too far," observed the host: "men of this sort, when irregularity and extravagance have once become their way of life, can never right themselves again. A life of order, one that deserves the name of life, appears to them trivial and unmeaning; they are lost."

"Very true," said Eulenböck: "and merely to give you a striking instance of his madness, hear how he went to work with his library. He inherited from his worthy father an incomparable collection of books; the most magnificent editions of the classics, the greatest rarities of Italian literature, the first editions of Dante and Petrarch, things which one inquires after in vain, even in great cities. It comes into his head now that he must have a secretary to keep this library in order, to enter newly purchased books in a catalogue, to arrange the works systematically, and so forth. A young

libertine proposes himself for this important office, and is immediately accepted, because he can chatter. There is not much to write, but he must learn to drink; and the loose companion takes his lessons kindly. Presently begins a mad life; day after day wild and wasteful, balls, masquerades, water-parties, open house kept for half the town. So by the end of half a year, when the young bibliologist comes to beg his salary, there is a lack of cash. The expedient they hit upon is, that he should take out his first year's salary in books at a fair rate. Neither master nor servant however know the value of the articles, which are indeed valuable only for connoisseurs, and these are not to be found in every street. The most precious works therefore were abandoned to him at a ridiculously low rate, and, the expedient once discovered, the same game is played again and again, and the oftener, because the new favorite had sometimes occasion to make disbursements for his patron in ready money, which were then repaid him in books. So that I am afraid

nothing is left of the library but the book-cases."

"I know better than any one," said the counsellor, "in what an inexcusable manner the books were disposed of."

"These are all frightful stories," said Sophia; "who would tell them again in such a way even of his enemy?" "The worst of all though," proceeded Eulenböck, "was his passion for the celebrated beauty Betsy; for she accomplished on a large scale the destruction of his fortune, which his other follies could only partially injure. She too utterly ruined his character, which was originally well inclined. He has a good heart, but he is weak, so that every one who gains his favour can make what he will of him. My well-meant words died away upon the winds. I have sometimes sat up till midnight talking with him in the most pressing manner, but all my admonitions were merely thrown away. She had him so fast in her snares, that he was capable even of ill-treating his sincerest and oldest friends for her sake."

As the company rose from table, and during the exchange of compliments, Sophia took the opportunity, as she held out her hand to the old painter, who politely kissed it, to whisper distinctly in his ear, "O you most detestable of all detestable sinners, you ungrateful hypocrite! How can your perverse heart find in itself publicly to calumniate the man by whose benefits you have been enriched, and of whose thoughtlessness you take advantage, in order with your helpmates to plunge him into misery? Hitherto I have only taken you to be absurd, but good-natured; but I see it is not without a cause that you have the very physiognomy of a fiend! I abhor you!" She pushed him back with vehemence, and then hurried out of the room.

The company proceeded to the picture-saloon, where coffee was handed round. "What was the matter with my daughter?" the counsellor asked the painter: "she seemed so hasty, and had tears in her eyes."

"A dear good child," answered Eulenböck with a sneer; "you are truly fortunate, Mr.

Privy Counsellor, in a daughter with such a sensitive heart. She was so kindly solicitous about my health ; she thinks she sees an inflammation in my eyes, and imagined I might be in danger of losing my sight. That was the cause of her emotion."

"Excellent child!" exclaimed the father; "if I could but see her well settled, that I might die in peace!" The stranger had stayed behind to inspect the new picture which Erich was shewing him in the dining-room ; they now rejoined the company, and Dietrich followed. They were all engaged in very animated conversation : the stranger blamed the subject of the picture, which Dietrich chose to defend. "If Teniers, and the other Flemish masters," said the latter, "have represented the temptation of St. Anthony in a comic and grotesque manner, it is a fancy which we must excuse, considering the mood in which they painted, and indulgence must be shown to the subordinate talent which was incapable of creating a lofty work. But the subject requires a serious treatment, and the old German master there has undoubtedly suc-

ceeded. If the spectator can but be impartial, he will feel himself attracted and gratified by that picture."

"The subject," replied the stranger, "is not one for painting. The tormenting dreams of a doting old man, the spectres which he sees in his solitude, and which by delusive charms or horrors endeavour to divert him from his melancholy contemplation, can only fall within the range of grotesque phantoms, and only be exhibited fantastically, if it be permitted to exhibit them at all; whereas the female figure there, which is meant to be noble and at the same time alluring, a naked beauty in the bloom of youth, and which nevertheless is but a spectre in disguise, the wild shapes around rendered the more conspicuous by the abruptness of the contrast, the horror of the old man who is seeking, with the confidence of finding himself again, this medley of the most contradictory feelings is utterly senseless, and it is to be lamented that talent and art should be lavished and ruined in labouring upon such a subject."



“Your dislike,” said Dietrich, “carries with it the picture’s best praise. Is not then all that tempts man a spectre, only wrapped in the alluring form of beauty, or arming itself with an empty show of horror? May it not be thought that a representation like this has acquired in these latter days a double import? This temptation comes to all who are not quite conscious what their hearts are made of; but in that holy man we see the steady and pure eye, which is raised above fear, and has been long enough acquainted with the real invisible beauty to spurn horror and trivial desire. The truly beautiful leads us into no temptation; that which we ought to fear does not appear to us in an ugly mask and distorted shape. The attempt therefore of the old master admits of a justification before the tribunal of a refined taste—not so Teniers and his fellows.”

“The quality of that which we call mad, foolish, and absurd,” cried the stranger, “is boundlessness; it is that which it is, precisely because it does not admit of being confined within bounds, for by its limit every thing rational

becomes what it is—the Beautiful, the Noble, the Free, Art and Enthusiasm. But because in these there is a mixture of something unearthly and inexpressible, the fools suppose, it is unlimited, and in their assumed mysticism outrage nature and imagination. Do you see this mad Höllenbreughel here on this pillar? It is precisely because his eye had not a look left for truth and taste; because he had entirely renounced nature, and extravagance and madness supplied the place of inspiration and judgment with him; for this very reason do I like him the best of all the host of grotesque painters, for he shut the door without ceremony, and left the understanding on the outside. Look at Julio Romano's Hall of the Titans at Milan, his strange scenes with beasts and centaurs, and all the monsters of fable, his bacchanals, his bold mixture of the Human, the Beautiful, the Brutal, and the Wanton; dive deep into these studies, and you will then learn what a real poet can and may make of these strange and indistinct moods of our soul, and how it is in his power, even in this dream-woven net, to catch beauty."

“ In this way,” said Dietrich, “ we shall soon have despatched every subject, if we adopt a single square and rule, and dazzled by passion, transfer all the divinity of genius to a single name, and from a partial knowledge of one man, reject all that he has not performed, or could not perform ; who, after all, was but a single mortal, whose eye pierced not all depths, and from whom, at all events, death took away the palette, had even his powers been such that a universe of forms might have issued from his hand. A limit there must be ; who doubts that ? But the grave wisdom which one often sees priding itself on the observance of its rule, always reminds me of that singular property of the cock, who, whatever swashing and martial airs he may give himself, if he is laid on his side, and a chalk line is drawn from his beak along the ground, remains motionless as if in a fit of devotion, believing himself chained by God knows what natural necessity, philosophical rule, or indispensable limit of art.”

“ You grow presuming, my young antiquarian,” said the stranger, in a somewhat high

tone. "Good breeding will indeed soon have to be reckoned among the lost arts."

"To make up for it, however," rejoined Dietrich, "good care is taken that arrogance do not fail, and that conceit flourish in full vigour." He made a hasty bow to the master of the house and left the company.

"I do not know how I come to be treated in this way," said the stranger. "An evil destiny seems to reign over this saloon, that I always meet giants here who want to trample me in the dust."

Old Walther was exceedingly vexed at the occurrence of such scenes in his house. As he had been obliged already at table to give up the Unknown, so he now gave up the thought of ever proposing the young painter as his son-in-law. He addressed himself in a pacifying tone to the stranger, who in his anger was bestowing a greater degree of attention on the Höllenbreughel than he would otherwise have done. "Is it not," he began, "an excellent picture of its kind?"

"The finest of this master I ever saw,"

answered the young man, out of humour. He took his glass to his assistance to examine it more accurately. "What is this?" cried he, suddenly. "Do you see, where the legs of the two devils and the fiery tail of the third come together, there is formed a face, a truly strange expressive profile, and, if I am not mistaken, a striking likeness of your old friend the worthy artist?"

All crowded to the place; no one had remarked this singular device. The rogue, Eulenböck, acted surprise most to the life. "That a memorial of me," said he, "should be preserved in this singular remembrancer, I could never have dreamt; if the spiteful painter had a presentiment of my profile, it was too cruel to make this fiery tail just form my nose, though it has a reddish tinge."

"The thing," said Erich, "is so singularly introduced, that one really cannot ascertain whether it be design or mere accident."

Walther examined the profile in the picture, then perused the physiognomy of his friend,

*Eulenböck discovered*

shook his head, grew pensive, and made his bow with an absent air when the stranger took his leave with Eulenböck, who had begged his company to shew him his paintings.

“What is the matter with you?” asked Erich, who had stayed behind with the old gentleman in the saloon. “You seem out of humour at this curious sport of chance which extorted laughter from all of us; the sot is surely sufficiently punished by having his portrait so nicely formed by this devil’s crew.”

“Do you then really take it for chance?” cried Walther, in a rage: “Do you not see that the old rogue has fraudulently palmed this picture upon me? that it is his production? Only look here, I would not shame him before the rest; but not content with this sketch of himself he has also inscribed the name of Eulenböck in minute letters above there, in the enormous mustachio of the great devil, who is grinding the souls in a hand-mill. I discovered the scrawl a short time back; but I believed, as it was not very distinct, the painter or some

one else meant to inscribe the name of Höllenbreughel: in this way the old scoundrel himself explained it to me when I shewed it him, and read it Ellenbroeg, and added that artists had never concerned themselves particularly with orthography. A light now dawns upon me, that it was only this profligate sot who seduced the young man to sell me the Salvator; that you have likewise had such another of him; and we have to fear withal that our own faces will some time or other be introduced, under God knows what horrible circumstances, in some degrading position, by way of a pasquinade."

He was so enraged that he raised his fist to dash the picture to pieces. But Erich restrained him and said, "Do not destroy in a fit of spleen a remarkable production of a virtuoso, which will hereafter afford you entertainment. If it is the work of our Eulenböck, as I am myself now forced to believe, and if the two Salvators are likewise his, I cannot but admire the man's talent. It is a mad way in which he has drawn himself; at the same time

this freak can hurt no one but himself, since you and I, whom he would otherwise have lightened of many a dollar, will now be on our guard against buying of him. But there is something else preys on your spirits, I see it by your looks. Can I give you advice? Perhaps the old anxiety about your daughter?"

"Yes, my friend," said the father; "and how is it with you? Have you yourself reflected on what I said?"

"Much and often," answered Erich; "but, my dear visionary friend, though there may be happy marriages without passion, there must at least be a sort of inclination; now that I do not find, and I cannot be angry with your daughter for it,—we are too unlike each other. And it were pity the dear creature, with her lively feelings, should not be happy."

"Who is to make her so?" cried the father; "there is nobody to be found whom she likes, and who is fit for her; you withdraw altogether; my unknown high-minded guest offered me to-day a most mortifying affront with his consequential manners; young Dietrich would



never make a sensible husband, for I see he cannot adapt himself to the way of the world, and of young Eisenschlicht I do not even venture to speak. Besides, the loss of those glorious pictures sunk with a new weight upon my heart. Into what hiding-place has the foul fiend carried them? I would not grudge them, look you, to my worst enemy, so long as they were but visible. And then—am I not in Edward's debt too? You know at what low prices I bought of him from time to time all that he found in his paternal inheritance. He had no knowledge of the articles, set no value on them; I never pressed him, never tempted him,—but still—if the young fellow would turn an orderly man, if he would strike into the better road, if I were only sure it would not spoil him again, that he would not squander it away, I would willingly pay him a considerable arrear.”

“Bravo!” cried Erich, and gave him his hand. “I have never lost sight of the young man; he is not quite so bad as the town-talk

makes him out ; he may still become a respectable man. If we see an improvement in him, and you feel yourself inclined in his favour, perhaps your daughter may sooner or later think well of him too, possibly she may please him. What would there be then to prevent you from bestowing your property to make them a happy pair, from dandling your grandchildren on your knees, instilling into them the rudiments of the arts, and hearing them lisp in this saloon the illustrious names of your favourite masters ?”

“ Never !” cried the old man, and stamped the ground. “ How ! my only child to such a worthless profligate ? To him this collection here, to let him waste it in riot, and sell it for an old song ? No friend can give me such advice.”

“ Be calm only,” said Erich ; “ deliberate on the proposal dispassionately, and endeavour to sound your daughter.”

“ No, no !” repeated Walther aloud ; “ it cannot, may not be ! If indeed he could produce but one of those precious incomparable

pictures, which are now lost for ever, there might be some better occasion for talking on this subject. But as it is, spare me in future all proposals of this sort.—And that infernal Breughel here! I will hang him aloft there, out of my sight, with the gallows physiognomy of the old reprobate, and all his devils.”

He looked up, and again Sophia was peeping down from the little window, observing their conversation. She blushed, and ran away without shutting the window, and the old gentleman cried, “That was still wanting! Now has the self-willed baggage overheard all, and very likely fills her little stubborn head with these notions.”

The old friends parted, Walther dissatisfied with himself and all the world.

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At a late hour in the night, Edward was sitting in his lonely chamber, occupied with a multiplicity of thoughts. Around him lay unpaid bills; and he was heaping by their side the sums which were to discharge them the next

morning. He had succeeded in borrowing a fund upon fair terms, on the security of his house; and, poor as he seemed to himself, he was still satisfied in the feeling imparted to him by his firm resolution of adopting a different course of life for the future. He saw himself, in imagination, already active; he formed plans, how he would rise from a small post to a more important one, and in this prepare himself for one still more considerable. "Habit," said he, "becomes a second nature, in good as in evil; and as indolence has hitherto been necessary to my enjoyment, occupation will in future be no less so. But when, when will this golden age of my nobler consciousness really and truly arrive, when I shall be able to view the objects before me and myself with complacency and satisfaction? At present it is only resolutions and sweet hopes that bloom and beckon me on; and, alas! shall I not flag at half way, perhaps even at the outset of my career?"

He looked tenderly at the rose in the water-glass; it seemed to return his gaze with a blushing smile. He took it, and with a deli-

cate touch pressed a soft kiss on its leaves, and breathed a sigh into its cup; he then carefully replaced it in the nourishing element. He had recently found it again already withered in his bosom; from the hour when it touched his face in its fall, he had become a different man, without being willing to own the change to himself. Man is never so superstitious, and so inclined to pay attention to omens, as when the heart is deeply agitated, and a new life is on the point of rising out of the tempest of the feelings. Edward himself did not observe to what a degree the little flower made Sophia present to his mind; and as he had lost all, and almost himself, he resolved the withered plant should be his oracle, to see whether it would recover its strength, and announce to him too the revival of his fortune. But when, after some hours, it did not open itself in the water, he assisted it and its oracular power by the common operation of lopping the stalk, then holding it a few moments in the flame of the candle, and afterwards setting the flower again in the cold element. It recovered its strength almost visibly

after this violent assistance, and blossomed so rapidly and strongly, that Edward feared it would in a short time drop all its leaves. Still after this he felt cheered, and once more trusted his stars.

He rummaged among old papers of his father, and found numberless reminiscences of his childhood, as well as the youth of his parent. He had spread out before him the contents of a cabinet which contained bills, memorandums, pleadings of a suit, and many things of the same sort. A paper now rolled open, containing the catalogue of the late gallery, the history of the pictures, their prices, and whatever had struck the owner as remarkable in each piece. Edward, who on his return from a journey had found his father on his deathbed, had after the funeral searched in a variety of quarters for those lost pictures, and made many unavailing inquiries. He had reason to expect that a word might here be found respecting the missing ones, and in fact he discovered in another packet, hidden between papers, a memorandum which exactly described those pieces, and contained the names of the masters, as well as of

the former proprietors. The writing evidently belonged to the last days of his father, and beneath were the words, "These pieces are now———" The hand had written no farther, and even these lines had been erased again.

Edward now searched more actively, but not a trace appeared. The light was burnt down to the socket; his blood was heated; he tossed the papers hastily about the room, but nothing was to be discovered. On opening a paper which age had turned yellow, he saw to his astonishment a note drawn many years back, in which his father acknowledged himself Walther's debtor for a sum therein named. There was no receipt upon it, and yet it was not in the creditor's hands. How was this circumstance to be explained?

He put it into his pocket, and calculated that, if the paper was binding, he should scarcely have any thing left from the mortgage of his house. He looked at a purse which he had put in a corner, and which was designed to give, once for all, a considerable assistance to the families which he had hitherto secretly

maintained. For as he was thoughtless in his prodigality, so was he in his charities; they too might, in strictness, have been termed prodigalities.—“If I can only avoid touching this sum, that the poor people may once more be made happy, I may after that just as well begin entirely anew, and rely only on my own powers.” This was his last thought before he fell asleep.

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Edward had been invited by the counsellor to dinner; it was the first invitation he had received from him for a long time; and though the youth did not comprehend the cause of this returning good-will in his old friend, still he went in high spirits, chiefly in the pleasing expectation of renewing his former acquaintance with Sophia. He took with him the paper which he had discovered.

It annoyed him extremely to find there the elder and younger Von Eisenschlicht; still, as he sat fronting Sophia at table, he addressed himself chiefly to her, and took pains to appear



calm, though his feelings were violently excited; for it did not escape him, that old Walther paid all possible attentions to young Eisenschlicht, and almost neglected him; it was known too in the town, that the counsellor wished to have the rich young man for a son-in-law. The latter received the kindness of his host as if it was a matter of course; and Erich, who wished well to Edward, endeavoured to prevent the excited youth from breaking out into violence. Sophia was sprightliness itself: she had dressed herself more than usual, and her father could not help often viewing her attentively, for her costume varied in some points from her usual style, and reminded him more strongly than ever of that lost picture of Messys, which represented the two young people, to a certain degree of likeness, as shepherds.

After dinner the company assembled in the picture-saloon, and Erich could not help smiling when he observed that his friend had actually hung the counterfeit Höllenbreughel aloft in a corner, where he could scarcely be noticed. The younger Eisenschlicht seated him-

self by the side of Sophia, and seemed to be engaged in very earnest conversation with her. Edward paced unquietly up and down, and looked at the pictures; Erich conversed with the father of the young suitor, and Walther kept an attentive eye on all.

“But why,” said Erich to his neighbour, “are you disgusted with most of the works of the Flemish school here?”

“Because they represent so many tatterdemalions and beggars,” answered the rich man. “Nor are these Netherlanders the sole objects of my dislike: I hate particularly that Spaniard Murillo on that account, and even a great number of your Italians. It is melancholy enough that one cannot escape this vermin in the streets and market-places, nay, even in our very houses; but that an artist should require me besides to amuse myself with this noisome crew upon a motley canvas, is expecting rather too much from my patience.”

“Perhaps then,” said Edward, “Quintin Messys would suit you, who so frequently sets

before us with such truth and vigour money-changers at their counters, with coins and ledgers."

"Not so either, young gentleman," said the old man: "that we can see easily and without exertion in reality. If I am to be entertained with a painting, I would have stately royal scenes, abundance of massy silk stuffs, crowns and purple mantles, pages and black-moors; that, combined with a perspective of palaces and great squares, and down broad straight streets, elevates the soul; it often puts me in spirits for a long time, and I am never tired of seeing it over and over again."

"Undoubtedly," said Erich, "Paul Veronese, and several other Italians, have done many capital things in this department also."

"What say you to a marriage of Cana in this manner?" asked Edward.

"All eating," replied the old man, "grows tiresome in pictures, because it never stirs from its place; and the roast peacocks and high-built pasties, as well as the cup-bearers half bent double, are in all such representations

annoying things. But it is a different case, when they are drawing a little Moses out of the water, and the king's daughter is standing by, in her most costly attire, surrounded by richly dressed ladies, who might themselves pass for princesses, men with halberds and armour, and even dwarfs and dogs: I cannot express how delighted I am, when I meet with one of these stories, which in my youth I was forced to read in the uneasy confinement of a gloomy school-room, so gloriously dressed up. But you, my dear Mr. Walther, have too few things of this sort. Most of your pictures are for the feelings, and I never wish to be affected, and least of all by works of art. Nor indeed am I ever so, but only provoked."

"Still worse," began young Eisenschlicht, "is the case with our comedies. When we leave an agreeable company, and, after a brilliant entertainment, step into the lighted theatre, how can it be expected that we should interest ourselves in the variety of wretchedness and pitiful distress that is here served up for our amusement? Would it not be possible to

adopt the same laudable regulation which is established by the police in most cities, to let me subscribe once for all for the relief of poverty, and then not be incommoded any farther by the tattered and hungry individuals?"

"It would be convenient, undoubtedly," said Edward; "but whether absolutely laudable, either as a regulation of police, or a maxim of art, I am not prepared to say. For my own part, I cannot resist a feeling of pity towards the individual unfortunates, and would not wish to do so, though to be sure one is often unseasonably disturbed, impudently importuned, and sometimes even grossly imposed upon."

"I am of your opinion," cried Sophia: "I cannot endure those dumb blind books, in which one is to write one's name, in order placidly to rely upon an invisible board of management, which is to relieve the distress as far as possible. In many places even it is desired that the charitable should engage to give nothing to individuals. But how is it possible to resist the sight of woe? When I give to him who complains to me of his distress, I at all events

see his momentary joy, and may hope to have comforted him."

"This is the very thing," said the old merchant, "which in all countries maintains mendicity, that we cannot and will not rid ourselves of this petty feeling of soft-hearted vanity and mawkish philanthropy. This it is, at the same time, that renders the better measures of states abortive and impracticable."

"You are of a different way of thinking from those Swiss whom I have heard of," said Edward. "It was in a Catholic canton, where an old beggar had long been in the habit of receiving his alms on stated days, and, as the rustic solitude did not allow much trade and commerce, was accounted in almost every house one of the family. It happened however, that once when he called at a cottage, where the inmates were extremely busied in attending a woman in labour, in the confusion and anxiety for the patient, he met with a refusal. When after repeating his request he really obtained nothing, he turned angrily away, and cried as he departed, 'Well, I promise

you, you shall find I do not come again, and then you may see where you catch another beggar.’”

All laughed, except Sophia, who would have it the beggar's threat was perfectly rational, and concluded with these words: “Surely if it were put out of our power to perform acts of benevolence, our life itself would become poor enough. If it were possible that the impulse of pity could die in us, there would be a melancholy prospect for our joy and our pleasure. The man who is fortunate enough to be able to bestow, receives more than the poor taker. Alas! it is the only thing,” she added with great emotion, “that can at all excuse and mitigate the harshness of property, the cruelty of possession, that a part of what is disproportionately accumulated is dropped upon the wretched creatures who are pining below us, that it may not be utterly forgotten we are all brethren.”

The father looked at her with a disapproving air, and was on the point of saying something, when Edward, his beaming eyes fixed on the moist eyes of the maid, interposed with vehe-

mence: "If the majority of mankind were of the same way of thinking, we should live in a different and a better world. We are struck with horror when we read of the distress that awaits the innocent traveller in wildernesses and deserts of foreign climes, or of the terrible fate which wastes a ship's crew on the inhospitable sea, when in their sorest need no vessel or no coast will appear on the immeasurable expanse; we are struck with horror when monsters of the deep tear to pieces the unfortunate mariner—and yet do we not live in great cities, as upon the peak of a promontory, where immediately at our feet all this woe, the same horrible spectacle displays itself, only more slowly, and therefore the more cruelly? But from the midst of our concerts and banquets, and from the safe hold of our opulence, we look down into this abyss, where the shapes of misery are tortured and wasted in a thousand fearful groups, as in Dante's imagery, and do not venture even to raise their eyes to us, because they know what a cold look they meet, when their cry rouses us at times out of the torpor of our cold apathy."



“These,” said the elder Eisenschlicht, “are youthful exaggerations. I still maintain, the really good citizen, the genuine patriot, ought not to suffer himself to be urged by a momentary emotion to support beggary. Let him bestow on those charitable institutions as much as he can conveniently spare; but let him not waste his slight means which ought in this respect also to be subservient to the higher views of the state. For in the opposite case, what is it he does? He promotes by his weakness, nay, I should be inclined to call it a voluptuous itching of the heart, imposture, laziness and impudence, and withdraws his little contribution from real poverty, which, after all, he cannot always meet with, or discern. Should we however be willing to acknowledge that overcharged picture of wretchedness to be correct, what good, even in this case, can a single individual effect? Is it in his power to improve the condition of the wretch who is driven to despair? What does it avail to give relief for a single day or hour? The unfortunate being will only feel his misery the more deeply, if he cannot change his state

into a happy one; he will grow still more dissatisfied, still more wretched, and I injure instead of benefiting him."

"Oh! do not say so," exclaimed Edward, "if you would not have me think harshly of you, for it sounds to me like blasphemy. What the poor man gains in such a moment of sunshine? Oh! sir, he who is accustomed to be thrust out of the society of men; he, for whom there is no holiday, no market-place, no society, and scarcely a church, for whom ceremony, courtesy and all the attentions which every man usually pays to his neighbour are extinct; this wretched creature, for whom, in public walks and vernal nature, there shoots and blossoms nothing but contempt, often turns his dry eye to heaven and the stars above him, and sees there even nothing but vacancy and doubts; but in such an hour as that which unexpectedly bestows on him a more liberal boon, and enables him to return to his gloomy hovel, to cheer his pining family with more than momentary comfort, faith in God, in his father, again rises in his heart, he becomes once more a man, he feels again

the neighbourhood of a brother, and can again love him and himself. Happy the rich man, who can promote this faith, who can bestow with the visible the invisible gift; and woe to the prodigal, who through his criminal thoughtlessness deprives himself of those means of being a man among men; for most severely will his feelings punish him, for having poured out in streams in the wilderness, like a heartless barbarian, the refreshing draught, of which a single drop might have cheered his brother, who lay drooping under the load of his wearisome existence." He could not utter the last words without a tear; he covered his face, and did not observe that the strangers and Erich had taken leave of their host. Sophia too wept; but she roused herself and recovered her composure as her father returned.

After his feelings had subsided in the course of a conversation on other topics, Edward drew the paper out of his pocket, and laid before the counsellor the doubtful case, and how much he was afraid that he was still his debtor in a considerable sum, which he purposed to pay him

by means of a loan which he would endeavour to procure upon his house.

The old gentleman looked alternately at him and the yellow paper with widely-opened eyes; at last he grasped the hand of the youth, and said with a tremulous voice: "My young friend, you are a great deal better than I and the world supposed you; your fine feeling delights me, and though you ought not to have spoken so vehemently to Mr. Von Eisenschlicht, I was nevertheless moved; for, to say the truth, I think with you upon that point. As to this paper, I can scarcely give you a decisive answer, whether it is valid or not. It originates from an early period, when I had various and at times intricate money-dealings with your worthy father: we assisted one another in our speculations and journeys; and the old gentleman was to be sure at that time, in early youth, sometimes a little slippery and wild. He here acknowledges himself indebted to me in a considerable sum: the note must have been lost among his papers; I know nothing more of it, because we had a great many accounts to settle with

one another, and I was at that time of day myself not so steady as now. However (and with these words he tore the paper to pieces), let this apparent demand be cancelled ; for in no case, not even if the debt were clear, could I accept this sum from you, my son ; it would at all events be my duty to pay you as much by way of arrear for those pictures, which you sold me far too cheap. If it is in my power, my good boy, to give you any sort of assistance, reckon upon me, and all may perhaps still be well."

Edward bent over his hand and cried, "Yes, be my father ; supply the place of him whom I prematurely lost ! I promise you, it is my firm purpose, I will become another man, I will make up for my lost time ; I hope still to become useful to society. But the advice of a father, the encouragement of a friend, must guide me, to enable me to take confidence in myself."

"This happy turn," said the old man, "things might have taken with us many years ago, but you at that time despised it. In whatever I can be of service to you, you may safely reckon

upon me. But now I will, for curiosity's sake, take another look at my papers, to see whether they contain any account of this debt."

He left the two young people alone, who first gazed awhile on one another in silence, and then flew into each other's arms. They held each other for a long time clasped. Sophia then gently disengaged herself, kept the youth at a distance, and said, looking him in the face with a sprightly air, "How happens this to me? Edward, what should this signify to us?"

"Love," cried Edward, "happiness, and eternal truth. Believe me, dearest girl, I feel as if I had waked from a stifling dream. The happiness, which lay so close at my feet, which my affectionate father designed for me, as he stood by thy cradle, I spurned from me like a rude boy, to make myself contemptible to the world and to myself. Hast thou then forgiven me, gentle being? Canst thou then love me?"

"I wish thee well from my very heart, my old playmate," said Sophia: "but for all that, we are not happy yet."

"What can there be still in our way?" cried

Edward. "Oh! how deeply am I ashamed, to have been capable of mistaking so grossly your generous father! How kindly he meets my wishes! How cordially he presses me to his bosom as his son!"

"Ay, thou strange creature," said Sophia, laughing, "but his caresses were not meant so. But the man will never reflect as long as he lives, and immediately begins to reckon without his host! Of what you are talking of, papa, however kind he may be, will not consent to hear a syllable. Besides, we must first become better acquainted with each other. These are things, my friend, which may linger on for years to come. And in the mean time you perhaps may shift about again, and then in your jovial company laugh over my sorrow and my tears."

"No," cried Edward, and threw himself at her feet, "do not think harshly of me; be as good and kind as thy eye bespeaks thee! And I feel it, thy father will rejoice in our happiness, and bless our union!" He embraced her passionately, without observing that her father had returned, and was standing behind him.

“What is that, young gentleman?” cried the old man angrily: “bless your union?” No, drive away, banish from his house, that will he, the loose companion who would thus abuse his confidence and partiality.”

Edward had risen and looked him earnestly in the face. “You do not mean to give me your daughter for my wife?” he asked in a quiet tone.

“What!” cried the old man with the greatest impatience, “are you raving, master? To a man who has sold and flung away his paternal inheritance, the most precious pictures? Not though you were worth a million, should a man so void of feeling ever obtain her! Ay, then indeed, after my death, perhaps even in my lifetime, my treasures would be brought to a fine market: there would the pictures go flying to all the four corners of the world, that I should not rest in my grave. He is politic, however, my pretty gentleman. First properly opens my heart, brings me with noble magnanimity an old bond of his father’s, which he is ready to pay me, tickles me into emotion, that I may



become still more magnanimous, still more generous and heroic, and throw my daughter into his arms. No, no, my young sir, you have not won the game so easily with me. The debt is discharged; I find no traces of it in my books, and even, as I said before, if there were, I will even assist you, as I promised, by word and deed, with friendship and money, as much as you can reasonably desire. But as to my child, let her be left out of the business, and to that end I beg in future to decline your company in my house. Nor, if I know her mind, has she any inclination for you. Speak, Sophy, could you prevail upon yourself to take up with such a good for nought?"

"I have no wish to marry yet," said Sophia, "and least of all a person who is more fit for any thing in the world than a husband." Half in pain, and yet smiling, she threw the youth a parting look, and left the saloon.

"Sophia!" cried Edward, and was on the point of hastening after her: "how canst thou speak those words?" The old man held him fast

by the skirts, and threatened by his looks to give him another long lecture; but Edward, who had now entirely lost his patience, took up his hat, and placing himself in front of the father, said with a voice overpowered by anger and sobs, "I am going, sir, and do not return, mark that, to your house, till you send for me, till you yourself invite me back again! Ay, till you earnestly entreat me not to disdain your dwelling. I cannot fail; talents, good conduct, accomplishments, these pave my way to the highest posts. I am already recommended to the prince. That however is the first and least step to my fortune. Wholly different roads must open to me. And then, when the city prides itself on having given me birth, when I have quite forgotten the present hour, then will I send some confidential person of reputation to you, and privately inquire after your daughter: then will you be in ecstasy, at finding that I still remember you; you will fold your hands in gratitude to Heaven, for showing you the possibility of obtaining such a son-in-

law,—and so, precisely so, it will come about, and in this way I shall force you to give me your daughter.”

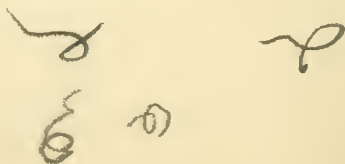
He rushed out, and the father looked after him with an air of doubt, and muttered, “Now has he quite lost his senses.”

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In the open air, as a violent snow storm beat against his face, the youth's extraordinary heat began to cool; he could not help first smiling, and then laughing aloud at his own vehemence, and those absurd speeches; and when he had returned home, as he changed his dress, he perfectly recovered his senses. This was a day of the highest importance for him, for the hour had now come, when he was to present himself to the prince, who, as he was told, had in the meanwhile arrived. The suit which he put on to-day was one which he had not worn for a long time, nor had he ever looked at himself with such attention in the glass. He surveyed his shape, and could not conceal from himself that his proportions were good, that his eye

was full of fire, his face pleasing, and his brow noble. "My first appearance," said he to himself, "will at least not displease him. All men, even those who dislike me, praise the address and refinement of my carriage; I possess a variety of talents and knowledge, and what I want I can, at my age, and with my excellent memory, easily supply. He will take a liking to me, and I shall soon grow indispensable to him. Intercourse with the great world will, by degrees, polish off all the rust that may still cling to me from bad company. If I travel with him, and am forced to absent myself for a year or even longer from this spot, these qualities will, in foreign countries, only contribute the more to fix me firmly in his favour. We then come back; my accomplishments, my pretensions, will, through his protection, meet with offers of the most considerable posts here, or even abroad, and I shall then certainly not have forgotten that it was after all, in fact, Sophia who first roused my better self from its lethargy."

He was now dressed, and so intoxicated with



his hopes, that he did not observe he was again using the same language in his soliloquy, for which he had just before been laughing at himself. He took out of the glass the full-blown rose, and pressed it to his lips, to strengthen himself for his visit ; but at the same moment, all its leaves dropped at his feet. An evil omen ! He sighed, and went out to get into the carriage.

On his arrival at the palace, he gave one of the servants his letter of recommendation to the prince. As he was walking up and down by the side of the pier glasses, young Dietrich, to his astonishment, came out of a side room in hurry and confusion, and at first did not observe his acquaintance. "How come you here?" asked Edward hastily. "Do you know the prince?" "Yes—no—" stammered Dietrich—"it is a singular affair, which—I will tell it you, but here we shall have no time for it."

This was indeed the case, for a richly-dressed lady, sparkling with jewels, stepped in with an imposing air, and drove off the young painter, who retired with awkward bows. Edward stood still as the glittering apparition approached ;

he was on the point of bowing, but astonishment paralysed his motion, when on a sudden he recognized in her the fair one who, to the prejudice of his reputation, had so long resided in his house, and more than all his extravagances had reduced his fortune. "How!" he exclaimed, "thou—you here in these apartments?"

"And why not?" said she laughing: "these are good quarters. Thou perceivest, of course, my friend, that as I was once thy protégée, so now I am the protégée of the prince; and if thou hast any favour to ask of him, I can perhaps be of service to thee, faithless as thou art, for he has more tenderness than thou, and I can calculate more safely on the continuance of his favour, than was possible with thy volatile humour."

Edward did not choose at this juncture to recall to the kind fair one's recollection, that it was she who first deserted him, as soon as she saw that his fortune was spent. He disclosed to her his situation, and his hopes, and she promised to exert her interest in his behalf

with the utmost zeal. "Be calm only, my friend"—so she concluded her assurances—"thou canst not and shalt not fail, and then it will be seen whether thou hast preserved a spark of love for me in thy cold heart. Only thou must be cautious, and play the stranger in his presence, that he may not learn or observe that we formerly knew each other."

With a hasty kiss, during which her painted cheek excited his vehement disgust, she left him, and Edward paced up and down the saloon in the greatest uneasiness, at finding every thing assume a shape so entirely different from that which he had figured to himself. To meet with this creature, whom he could not help hating, in his new sphere, overthrew all his hopes, and he firmly resolved to elude her snares and enticements, though this virtue of his should expose him to the greatest disadvantages.

Here the door opened, and the repulsive stranger stepped in, with his arrogant gait and supercilious mien.

Edward went up to him and said, "Perhaps

you belong to the retinue of his Highness, and can inform me whether I can now have the honour of paying my respects to him?" The stranger stood still, looked at him, and after a pause answered in a cold tone, "That I can indeed tell you; no one better than I." Edward was startled at observing the letter of recommendation in his hand. "Will not the prince speak with me?" he asked in dismay. "He is speaking to you," answered the other, in so sneering and contemptuous a tone, that the youth entirely lost his composure. "I have been staying in this city for some time past," proceeded the dignified stranger, "and have been enabled by my incognito to make myself acquainted with men and circumstances. We fell in one another's way in a somewhat singular manner; and though I might excuse that step which you are yourself conscious was not quite an innocent one, still it has inspired me with a just mistrust of your character; so that I cannot possibly grant you a place which would unite us in a confidential intimacy. I therefore return you this letter, to which, notwithstanding the warmth of



the recommendation, and the highly respectable hand from which it comes, I can pay no attention. As to the personal affront I received from you, you have, as you did not know me, my full forgiveness, and your present shame and confusion is a more than sufficient punishment. A young man has just left me from whom I have bought a tolerably successful piece, and to whom I have also given some warnings and good lessons for his future conduct.—I see that our meeting agitates you rather too much, and as you had perhaps calculated upon the place with too great confidence, and are probably under a pressing momentary embarrassment, accept this ring as a memento of me, and a sign that I part from you without the slightest ill-will.”

Edward, who had in the meanwhile had time to recollect himself, stepped modestly back, and said: “Let not your Highness impute it to pride and haughtiness, if at this moment I decline this present, which under other circumstances I should have deemed the highest honour. I cannot disapprove of your Highness’s

way of proceeding, and you will, no doubt, allow me likewise to follow my own feelings."

"Young man," said the prince, "I do not mean to hurt your delicacy; and as you force my respect, I must tell you in addition, that notwithstanding the singular way in which we formed our acquaintance, we should still have become connected with each other, had not a person whom I cannot but respect and believe, and whom you met just now in this saloon, told me so many things to your disadvantage, and pressingy requested me to pay no regard to the letter."

"I shall not follow the lady's example," said Edward, perfectly restored to composure, "and in my turn accuse or complain of her, since she has, no doubt, spoken according to her conviction. If however your Highness will do me the favour to show me young Dietrich's work, and some of your other paintings, I shall take my leave of you with the greatest gratitude."

"I am glad," answered the prince, "that you

take an interest in the art ; I have indeed only a few things here, but one picture, which I was fortunate enough some days ago to make mine, is alone equivalent to an ordinary collection."

They stept into a richly-furnished cabinet, where, on the walls and some easels, were seen pictures ancient and modern. "Here is the young man's attempt," said the prince, "which certainly promises something, and though I cannot at all relish the subject, still the management of it deserves praise. The colouring is good, though rather harsh, the drawing is firm, and the expression pathetic. Only I wish people would have done painting Virgins with the Child." The prince drew aside a curtain, placed Edward in the right light, and exclaimed : "But look here at this finished, magnificent work of my favorite, Julio Romano, and give way to admiration and rapture." Edward in fact could not help saluting this large picture with a loud ejaculation, and with an expression of extreme pleasure and even laughter in his face ; for it was the well-known counterfeit of his old friend, on which he had

been at work for a year past. It was Psyche and Cupid sleeping. The prince took his place by his side, and cried: "To have made this acquisition alone repays me for my journey hither. And on this jewel I lighted at the house of that obscure old man!—a man who himself plays no inconsiderable part as an artist, but yet is not so well known by a great deal as he ought to be. He had been long in possession of the picture, and knew that it was Julio's; still, as he had not seen every thing of his, he had always some doubts remaining, and he was delighted to learn from me so many details respecting this master and his works. For in fact he has a sense of beauty, the old man, and knows well how to appreciate such a gem; but he had not penetrated into all the excellences of the painter. I should have been ashamed to take advantage of his ignorance, for he asked for this glorious work, which he came by in a singular way, too moderate a price; this I raised, in order to have paid for the ornament of my gallery at a rate worthy of it."

“He is fortunate,” said Edward, “this neglected old man, to have made such a connoisseur and so generous a protector his friend; it is perhaps in his power to enrich your Highness’s gallery with some other rarities, for in his dark lumber-room he possesses many things which he himself does not know or value, and is often self-willed enough to prefer his own works to all those of elder masters.”

Edward took his leave; he did not, however, go immediately home, but hastened, lightly drest as he was, to the park, ran briskly through the distant snow-covered walks, laughed aloud, and exclaimed: “O world, world! Mere toys and fooleries: O folly, thou motley, whimsical child, how prettily dost thou conduct thy favorites by thy glittering leading-strings! Long live the great Eulenböck, he who surpasses Julio Romano and Raphael! So for once in my life I have been fortunate enough to know one of the knowing ones.”

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Edward had now made preparations for the jovial evening which he had concerted with Eulenböck. A short time back this day appeared to him as an irksome one, which he only wished to have soon over; but now his mood was such, that he anticipated these hours of giddiness with pleasure, thinking they would be the last he should enjoy for a long time. Towards evening the old man made his appearance, trailing in with the help of a servant two hampers filled with wine. "What means this?" asked Edward: "Is not it settled then that I am to entertain you?" "And thou shalt too," said the veteran: "I am only bringing a supplementary stock, because thou dost not properly understand the thing, and because I mean this evening to make a complete bout of it."

"A melancholy purpose," rejoined Edward, "to resolve to be merry; and yet I have formed it too, in spite of myself and my destiny."

"See there," said Eulenböck, laughing, "hast thou too a destiny? That is more than I ever knew, youngster: to me thy nature seemed at the utmost prone to a sort of suspense. But

the other is undoubtedly the choicer word, and perhaps it may improve into dexterity, when thou art grown a little wiser. Ay, ay, my friend, dexterity, that is what most men want, intelligence to take advantage of circumstances or to produce them, and thereupon they fall into destiny, or even into that still more fatal suspense, when a Christian hand is not always to be found to cut them down."

"Thou art impudent," exclaimed Edward, "and thinkest thyself witty; or else thou art already fuddled."

"May be, child," said the other with a grin, "and we will soon take measures for sobering me again. Our good prince has placed me in a sort of affluence, which, if I have discretion, may be lasting; for he protects me admirably, means to buy still more of me, and even orders things from my own pencil. He thinks that in this town I am not in my place, that my merits are not sufficiently recognized, and that I lack encouragement. Perhaps he may take me with him, and improve me still into a genuine artist, for he has the best of inclinations

for it, and I precisely taste and talent enough to understand him, and let myself be advised by him."

"Rogue that thou art!" said his young friend, "I could not help laughing at thy having disposed so advantageously of thy Julio Romano; but still I should not like to be in thy place."

The old man went up to him, stared at him, and said, "And why not, chuck, if thou hadst but the gift required for it? Every man paints and tricks himself out, to put himself off for better than he really is, and to pass for a wonderfully precious original, when most of them are but daubed copies of copies. Hadst thou but heard my patron analyse the picture, then mightest thou have learnt something! Now I begin to understand all the technical designs of Julio Romano; thou wilt not believe how many excellences I had overlooked in the picture, how many passages of his racy pencil. Ay, it is delightful to penetrate so thoroughly into such an artist; and when one comprehends him entirely, and in all his parts alike, there creeps



over us in the full sense of his high merit a feeling of self-complacency, as though we ourselves had some share in the display of his genius; for fully to understand a work of art, they say, is in some measure to produce it. What deep gratitude I owe to my serene patron and critic, for having, beside the money, poured into me such a flood of inspiration!"

"If I had not seen the man at the canvas painting," exclaimed Edward smiling, "he might make me believe the picture was genuine."

"What hast thou seen?" answered the old man warmly: "what dost thou understand of the magic of art, and of those invisible spirits which are attracted and embodied by means of colour and design? These are very mysteries for the profane. Dost believe then that a man only paints to make a picture, and that the pallet, the pencil and the good purpose are sufficient? O my dear simpleton, there must concur besides strange conjunctures, astral influxes, and the favour of a variety of spirits, in order to bring about a work as it should be! Did it never fall within thy experience, that an

artist of fine perceptions and great depth of thought has spread his canvas, and dipped his pencil into the best colours, to lure and entice the most lovely ideal into his net? He has proposed to himself in the simplicity of his heart to paint an Apollo, he draws and touches, and rubs and brushes, and smiles enamoured and with the sweetest complacency at the creature which is to issue from the void and mist; and now when it is finished, behold all his skilfully-laid nets have caught a mere 'lob of spirits,' that grins and mows at us out of the Arcadian landscape! Now come the ignoramuses, and bawl and rave: 'The painter fellow has no talent, he has not properly understood the antique, he has produced a daub instead of an ideal,' and more such crude judgments. So is justice refused to the susceptible heart of the artist, because an absolute devil, an imp of darkness has fallen into the snare of his art, instead of an angel of light. For these spirits also range about, and only watch for an opportunity to embody themselves. Works of former painters, which have some-

how been lost, often wander about a long while distressed in empty space, till a kind and able man again affords them an opportunity of descending in a visible shape. It has cost me labour enough to recover that composition of the excellent Roman artist; it requires more study than thou didst spend in thy boyhood to kidnap thy neighbour's pigeons. If thou art of opinion that, to paint a sacred history, a man is not obliged to bring all his devotion to bear upon the subject, thou art under a great error, from which our talented young friend Dietrich would be best able to relieve thee."

Dietrich, who had just entered, and heard only the last sentiment, took occasion directly to enlarge on this theme. In the meanwhile, Eulenböck had the cloth laid, and arranged the wines in the order according to which they were to be tasted; after this he addressed himself to Edward with the question: "And what dost thou think of setting about now for the future?"

"In the first instance not much," answered he: "in the meanwhile I mean to resume and

carry on my neglected studies, and in particular to apply myself to history and the modern languages. I shall retrench, let the other parts of my house, which now stand empty without being of use to me, and retain only this little saloon and the adjoining rooms. In this way I hope, with a prudent style of living, to make shift easily for the first years, and in the meanwhile to render myself fit for some place or other."

"Here then will be thy study?" said Eulenböck, shaking his head. "This place does not at all please me, for I do not think these walls are adapted to lucubration; they have not the proper repercussion; the room itself has not the right quadrature; the thoughts rebound too violently and make a clatter; and if ever you want to continue them in a fugue, they will be sure all to clash in a hubbub together. It was another whim of your poor papa to spoil as he did this fine saloon in his latter years by his caprice. Formerly one looked upon the street on the one side, and here, on the other, over the garden and the park, away

to the hills and distant mountains. He not only blocked up this fine view, but even covered the window niches to a great depth with boards and wainscoting, and so destroyed the symmetry of the room. If I were in thy place, I would tear all that stuff, tapestry, and wainscoting open again, and if any of the windows are to be lost, block up those which look on the street."

"It was not caprice," said Edward; "it was done, this being his favourite room, on account of his health; the east wind hurt him, and caused him twinges of the gout. The verdant prospect he could enjoy in the other rooms."

"If old Walther was not a fool," proceeded Eulenböck, "you were easily relieved. He might give you the girl, who must at all events be settled, and all would be right again."

"Silence!" cried Edward, with the greatest vehemence: "only to-day let me forget what I hoped and dreamt. I would cease to think of her, since to my horror I have begun to feel that I love her. I will not remind myself how

stupidly and foolishly I behaved to her father ; not a thought shall cross me to-day, not even her incomprehensible behaviour. No, a glorious lot was prepared for me, I have become aware of it too late ; the punishment of my heedlessness is that I must renounce it for ever ! But how I can live without her, the future must teach me."

Here the young man, who till now had played the part of Edward's librarian, came in. " Here is the catalogue you ordered," said he, presenting a few leaves to the youth, who received them with shame. " How !" he exclaimed, " not more than about six hundred volumes remaining of that fine collection, and among these only the most ordinary works ?" The librarian shrugged his shoulders. " As from the beginning," he replied, " you paid me my salary in books, I was forced to take those which found the readiest purchasers ; nor am I a sufficient judge of curiosities, and probably did not set a sufficient value on these ; besides books, particularly rarities, vary in their value at different times ; and if the seller

is hard prest to raise a sum, he must take almost whatever is offered to him."

"At this rate then," said Edward, half in sadness, half with laughter, "I should certainly have done better to engage no librarian at all, or have sold the collection at first; I should then have had money in lieu of it, or have kept the books. And what a collection! With what affection my father cherished it! What a joy it was to him, when he obtained the rare Petrarch, the first edition of Dante and Boccacio. How could I forget that in most of these books there are notes from his hand! How would I prize these works, if I still possessed them! However, as I have no longer a library, you will suppose, as indeed I lately gave you notice, that I have no farther occasion for a librarian. In the mean while, we will spend one more merry day together."

Now came in the man who had often taken part in these wild bouts, and whom, on account of his turn of character, they never called by any other name but that of the Puritan. This name they had given him, because he never

chimed in with the cheerful mirth or frolicsome extravagance of the rest, but amidst mutterings and moral reflections consumed his share of the feast. "Now we only want the Crocodile," cried Eulenböck, "and we are all met." This was a little hypochondriac bookseller, pale and shrivelled, but one of the hardest drinkers. They had given him this singular name, because as soon as the slightest fumes of the liquor mounted into his brain he burst into tears, and continued to shed them in the greater abundance, the longer the carouse lasted, and the more extravagant the gaiety of the rest. The door opened, and the rueful figure completed the odd circle of the guests.

The table was covered with Perigord pies, oysters, and other savory viands; the company took their seats, and Eulenböck, whose purple face between the tapers cast a reverend sheen, thus solemnly began: "My assembled friends, a stranger who should suddenly step into this room might be induced, by these arrangements, which have the appearance of a feast, if he was not intimately acquainted with



the members of the company, to conceive the opinion, that preparations had here been made for guzzling, drinking, riot and extravagant jollity, such as befits only the rude multitude. Even a young artist named Dietrich, who is now for the first time sitting among us at this table, darts wondering glances at the multitude of these bottles and dishes, at these goose-liver pies, at these oysters and muscles and at the whole apparatus of a solemnity, which to him seems to promise an excess of sensual enjoyment, and he too will be surprized when he learns in how entirely different and directly opposite a sense all this is meant. Gentlemen, I beg you to give me your attention and not to let my words drop too lightly on your ears. If countries solemnize the birth of a prince, if in Arabia a whole tribe hails with festive rejoicings the epoch, when a poet makes his appearance and distinguishes himself; if the installation of a Lord Mayor is celebrated with a banquet; if even the birth of horses of generous breed is with good cause signalized in an impressive manner: it surely concerns us still

more closely (not to end with an anti-climax) to look up, to feel an emotion and to touch glasses a little, when the immortal spirit discovers itself to us, when virtue deigns to appear before us in corporeal shape. Yes, my friends, with affected heart I announce it to you, a young candidate for virtue is among us, who this very evening, like an emergent butterfly, will burst his case, and unfold his wings in a new state of being. It is no other person than our generous host, who has given us so many a feast, and so often filled our glasses. But an ardent purpose, not to mention that he is himself on the shallows, that impetus of inspiration, of which the ancients sang, now tears him from us aloft into fields of light, and we, from this table and these bottles and dishes, his earthly burial-place, gaze after him in dizzy amazement, to see to what unknown regions he will now steer his flight. I tell you, my dearest friends, he is revolving innumerable and excellent resolutions in his bosom: and what cannot man, even the weakest and most inconsiderable, resolve? Did you ever consider, (but in

your levity you think not of such things), that in a miserable map, if it contain only about a hundred places marked on it, a tract of a thousand miles may be concealed, and that yet it occupies itself no more room than a moderate folio? For there perspective lies by the side of perspective, and hill and dale and stream and wide, immeasurable prospects. So with purposes. Weakly as our Puritan or our friend Dietrich look, they still can carry, in good resolutions, more than ten elephants or twenty camels. How weak I am myself in this virtue, I know better than any one, and hence my reverence for those in whom I perceive such powers.

Now, as we are not all susceptible of this inspiration, we sit here at this table as at a cross-way, whence several roads branch off in various and opposite directions. At leading points of this sort, it is usual for the distances of towns towards all the four quarters of the world to be inscribed on a pyramidal post. The same may be said, under a not unjoyous image, to be the case here. These oysters, taken in excess, lead to sickness; this Burgundy, after a few

stages, to red noses; these truffles, with the appurtenances, to dropsy, cardialgy and similar complaints. Our Edward however disdainng all this moves on towards virtue. Fare thee well then on thy lonesome path, and we that are not so much afraid of carbuncled faces, pot-bellies and short breath, proceed along our road. But I too shall shortly leave you, my dearest companions. A generous stranger, whose name I may not yet mention, will animate my genius to the highest performances. He will in distant regions dispose me to receive the unction of idealism, and, if I may so speak, etherialize me. Our pious, warm-hearted Dietrich, with whom we have scarcely become acquainted, pursues his course along painted aisles and decorates his country's altars. What shall I say of thee, librarian, thou who standest before the empty bookcases, and hast not merely read, but literally swallowed, the works? O thou cormorant of erudition, thou of the sect of the Mussulman Omar, canker-worm of libraries, ravager of literature, thou that couldst destroy a new Alexandrian collection, simply by

the excellent new device of drawing thy salary, not intellectually, but really, from its books. All the booksellers of the Roman empire ought to send thee round to reduce collections to atoms by thy destructive power, and create a demand for new works. Thou, more than reviewer and worse than Saturn, who only devoured what he had himself begotten: where are they, thy wards, thy pupils, that with their gilt backs and edges so sweetly smiled on thee? To silver hast thou turned them all, and allowed a short interval between their golden and silver age. Farewell thou too, Puritan, most ingenuous of mortals, thou hater of all poetry and lies. Reach me thy hand at parting, poor Crocodile, that already art swimming in tears. In the morass of a tavern must thou howl in future. In a better life we shall all see one another again."

As Edward was pensive, and Dietrich still a stranger in the company, and the librarian and Puritan made no grimaces, there prevailed, during and after this harangue, a profound silence, rendered the more solemn by the sobs and

moanings of the bookseller, who had by this time emptied several glasses. "This is Twelfth night," said Edward, "and as it is the custom in many parts to make presents on this day, so I wish my old companions and friends to pass another convivial night with me."

"On this evening," proceeded Eulenböck, "there is no impropriety in deviating for once in a way from the usual routine of life. Hence games of chance were formerly customary at this season, though at other times they were forbidden. And how happy would it be for thee, friend Edward, if to-day thy lucky star were to rise again, and the impoverished spendthrift were favoured with a new fortune. One hears strange tales how young men, reduced by poverty to despair, have determined to hang themselves in their family mansion, and behold, down falls the nail with the beam of the ceiling, and with them at the same time many thousand gold pieces, which the prudent father had secreted there. Closely examined, a silly story. Was it possible then for the father to know that his son would have a particular partiality

for hanging? Could he calculate, that the body of the desperate youth would retain substance enough to discover and pull down by its weight the hidden treasure? Might not the prodigal son before have wanted to fix a chandelier there, and so found the money? In short, a thousand solid objections may be made by rational criticism to this ill-contrived tale."

"Without thy returning constantly to this taunt," said Edward, nettled, "my own conscience upbraids my levity and foolish dissipation. Were it not for the unruliness of the passions, which take a pride in setting reason at defiance, the preachers of morality would have light work of it. It is quite intelligible, that we poor mortals should believe ourselves possessed by evil spirits. For how is it to be explained, that one follows the bad at the same time that one perceives the better, nay, that often, even in our wildest hours, we feel more impelled towards good than towards evil, and even before the commission of the deed are tormented by our consciences? There must be a deeply-rooted corruption in human nature,

and one that will never be perfectly trained to a generous growth, nor changed by grafts of virtue."

"So it is," said the Puritan: "man is in himself good for nothing, he miscarried at his very creation. He can only be patched, and the botches always remain visible in the old rotten cloth."

"Ay, truly," sighed the Crocodile, "it is to be deplored, and again and again to be deplored." The tears flowed fast from his glowing eyes.

"When you took me for the first time into that tavern," proceeded Edward, addressing himself to the old painter, "did it then give me pleasure to see myself in that circle of coarse and irksome men? I was ashamed when the landlord accosted me with a respect, as though I had been a Deity that had descended from Olympus. Such an honour had never befallen his house before. People soon grew familiar with the presence of my dignity, and still I was attracted, against my will, within the fumes of the parlour, and the clamorous conversation, to my old side, by a kind of talisman, which did



not even break as the faces of the host and his people grew colder and even surly, when attention was no longer paid to my call, and meaner guests were treated with more ceremony; for by my negligence I had fallen into a considerable debt, for which I was dunned with coarse impertunity. Still worse it fared with a poor tattered wretch, a daily guest, who was scarcely even listened to, who often got spoilt vinegar, and yet durst not complain; he was the butt of the witty menials, the object of the insult and pity of the other strangers, as well as of his own timid contempt. And, ill as he was treated, he was still forced to pay dearer than any, and was imposed upon without venturing to complain, while his business was neglected, and his wife and children were pining at home. In this mirror I saw my own misery, and when once a plain mechanic, of unblemished life, happened to step in, and was greeted by all with respect as a rare phenomenon, I roused at last from my impotent lethargy, paid what my indolence only had neglected, and endeavoured to save that wretch too from sinking into utter ruin. But so it is, that even they

who grow rich by the thoughtless profligate, despise him, and cannot withhold their respect from the worthy man who avoids them. In this unworthy manner have I flung away my time and fortune, to purchase contempt."

"Be calm, my son," cried Eulenböck, "thou hast also done good to many a poor family."

"Let nothing be said of that," answered Edward, despondingly; "that too was done without judgment, as it was without judgment I spent, without judgment travelled, played and drank, and knew not how to secure a cheerful hour for myself or others."

"That indeed is bad," said the old man, "and, as far as the precious wine is concerned, a sin. But cheer up and drink, ye brave mates, and rouse our host to the mood which becomes him."

There was however no need of this exhortation, for the company was indefatigable. Even young Dietrich drank stoutly, and Eulenböck arranged the order in which the wines were to follow one another. "To-day is the trial!" he cried: "the battle must be won, and the con-

queror shews no mercy to the conquered. Look on my martial countenance, ye young heroes, here have I hung out the threatening blood-red banner, as a sign that no mercy is to be found. Nothing in the world, my friends, is so misunderstood as the apparently simple act which men superficially call drinking, and there is no boon to which less justice is done, which is so little prized, as wine. If I could wish ever to become useful to the world, I would induce an enlightened government to erect a peculiar chair, from which I might instruct our ignorant species in the admirable properties of wine. Who does not like to drink? There are but few unfortunate persons, who can with truth assert this of themselves. But it is a misery to see *how* they drink, without the least gusto, without style, light and shade, so that one hardly finds the vestige of a school; at the utmost colouring, which the insolent puppies presently fasten on their noses, and hang out as a trophy in the sight of the world."

"And how is one properly to begin?" asked Dietrich.

“In the first place,” rejoined the old man, “the foundation must be laid, as in all arts, by quiet humility and simple faith. Only no premature criticism, no inquisitive, impertinent snuffling, but a generous, confident self-devotion. When the scholar has made some progress, he may now begin to discriminate; and if the wine does but meet with a desire of learning and simplicity of character, its spirit communicates instruction through the heart to the head, and with enthusiasm awakens at the same time judgment. Only practice, the main requisite, must not be neglected; no empty idealism; for only action makes the master.”

“Oh! how true!” sighed the bookseller, letting his tears flow without restraint. “Words,” said the Puritan, “which the common herd would call golden.”

“Were not drinking,” proceeded Eulenböck, “an art and a science, there would only need to be a single beverage on earth, as the innocent element, water, already plays that part. But the spirit of nature, shifting and sporting with a lovely grace, infuses itself here and there

into the vine, and amidst wondrous struggles lets itself be strained and refined, in order to descend along the magic channel of the palate into our inmost recesses, and there to rouse all our noblest energies out of the torpor and lethargy of their primitive chaos. 'See, there goes the sot!' Oh! my friends, such too were the railings and jeers of those who had not been initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries. With this golden and purple tide there rolls and spreads within us a sea of harmony, and the rising dawn draws a melody from the old statue of Memnon, which till then had stood voiceless in the gloom of night. Through blood and brain courses and speeds exultingly the gentle call: 'the spring is come!' Then all the little spirits feel the sweet waves, and creep with laughing eyes out of their dark corners; they stretch their delicate little crystal limbs, and plunge to bathe in the wine-flood, and splash and shoot, and rise quivering out again, and shake their sparkling spirits' wings, that, as they rustle, the clear drops fall from the little plumes. They run about and meet each other, and kiss a joy-

ous life one from the other's lips. Still closer, still brighter grows the throng, more and more melodious their lispings; then with garlands and solemn triumph they lead the Genius along, who with his dark eyes can hardly peep through his luxuriant flower-wreaths. Now the man is conscious of infinity, immortality; he sees and feels the myriads of spirits within him, and takes pleasure in their frolics. What is one to say then of the vulgar souls, who cry after a man: 'look, the fellow is drunk.' What thinkest thou, honest Crocodile?"

The pale man of tears stretched forth his hand to him, and said; "Ah! my dear friend, the folks are right, and you are right, and the whole world is right. What you have rolled along in such a prophetic strain surpasses my comprehension, but I am blest in my deep emotion. When people go to the play, to weep for their money, it seems to me quite absurd; let others feel elevated by lofty sentiments and actions, I do not understand it; yet, when such good wine goes into me, it operates wonderfully, so that every thing, every thing, let men

say what they will, keep silence or laugh, resolves itself with me into the sweetest emotion. My heart, see you, is ready to break with pleasure ; I could fold all things, were it even your lame poodle, in my arms. But my eyes suffer under it, and the doctor wanted on that account to forbid me drinking. But this very thought is the most affecting of all ideas to me ; I could weep over it for days together : and so he was obliged to recall this direction."

"The more I drink," said the Puritan, "the more I hate the stuff which you have been palavering there, Eulenböck, and the more senseless it appears to me. Lies and tricks ! It is almost as silly as to sing over one's liquor the songs that are made for the purpose. Every word in them is a falsehood. When a man begins to compare one object with another, he lies directly. 'The dawn strews roses.' Can there be any thing more silly ? 'The sun sinks into the sea.' Stuff ! 'The wine glows with purple hue.' Foolery ! 'The morning wakes.' There is no morning, how can it sleep ? It is nothing but the hour when the sun rises.

Plague! The sun does not rise, that too is nonsense and poetry. Oh! if I had but my will with language, and might properly scour and sweep it! O damnation! Sweep! In this lying world, one cannot help talking nonsense!"

"Do not be put out, honest man," said Eulenhöck: "your virtue means well, and if you take a different view of the matter from mine, you at least drink the same wine, and almost as much as I do myself. Practice unites us, if theory separates us. Who understands himself nowadays? That is no longer the question even. I would only add one remark, though it be not connected with what I was saying before, that the mode in which men and physicians consider the process of nutrition and assimilation, as it is called, appears to me extremely silly. The oak grows out of its acorn, and the fig produces the fig-tree; and though they require air, water and earth, yet these are not properly the elements out of which they grow. In like manner nourishment only awakens in us our powers and our growth, but does not produce them; it gives the possibility,



but not the thing, and man sprouts out of himself like a plant. It is a stupid notion to believe that wine produces immediately of itself all the operations which we ascribe to it; no, as I was saying, its scent and breath only awaken the qualities which are dormant in us. Now rush forth powers, feelings and transports, when they are steeped in its waves. Do you suppose then that throughout the whole range of art and science the case is otherwise? I need not propound anew the old Platonic idea. Raphael and Correggio and Titian do but rouse my own self that slumbers in forgetfulness, and though the greatest genius, the deepest feeling of art, cannot, with all their imagination, invent the images which are presented to them by the great masters, yet these works themselves do but awaken old reminiscences. Hence too the thirst after new intellectual enjoyments, which else would not be commendable; hence the wish to discover the unknown, to produce the original, which otherwise were senseless. For we have a presentiment of the infinity of knowledge within us, that prophetic mirror

of eternity, and of what this eternity may become to us, an incessant increase of knowledge, that collects itself in the centre of a celestial tranquillity, and hence extends to new regions. And for this very reason, my dear brother toppers, there must be a multitude and a variety of wines."

"And which do you prefer?" asked Dietrich. "Is there not in this as in other things, the classical and perfect, the modern and trivial, the mannered and affected, the lovely old and simply plain, the hearty and the emptily bombastic?"

"Youngster," said the old man, "this question is too complicated: it pre-supposes immense experience, historical survey, rejection of prejudice, and a taste matured in all directions, one that can only be fixed and freed by length of years, continued labour and indefatigable study, as well as the instruments required for them, which are not in every man's hands. A few encyclopedical remarks will suffice. Almost every wine has its good qualities, almost all deserve to be known. If in our country the

Neckar exists scarcely for any purpose but to quench the thirst, the Würzburger now rises to the character of a generous wine, and the various superior sorts of Rhenish do not admit of being hastily characterized. You have had them before you, and tasted them. Duly to celebrate these noble streams, from the light Laubenheimer to the strong Nierensteiner, the mighty Rüdesheimer and the profound Hochheimer, with all their kindred floods, is a task to which there belongs more than the tongue of a Redi, who in his Tuscan Dithyrambic has raved but indifferently. These spirits pass down the palate pure and clear, refreshing the sense and refining the faculties. If I should illustrate them, it would be by the calm maturity of first-rate writers,—warmth and richness, without extravagance of fancy and dreaming allegory. What is the hotter Burgundy to him who can bear it? It descends into us like immediate inspiration; heavy, sanguine and violent, it rouses our spirits. The wine of Bourdeaux, on the other hand, is cheerful, loquacious; enlivens, but does not inspire. More luxuriant and

quaint are the creations of Provence and the poetical Languedoc. Then comes hot Spain, with its Sherries and right Malaga, and the glowing wines of Valencia. Here the wine-stream, as we taste it, transforms itself upon our palate into a globular shape, which rounds and widens more and more, and in Tokay and St. Georgen-Ausbruch it assumes this appearance still more substantially and emphatically. How are mouth and palate and the whole sense of pleasure filled by a single drop of the most generous Cape wine! These wines the connoisseur must only sip and palate, and not drink like our noble Rhenish. What am I to say of you, ye sweetest growths of Italy, and particularly of Tuscany, thou most spirited Monte-Fiascone, thou truly melting Monte-Pulciano? Well, taste then, my friends, and understand me! But thee I could not produce, thee, king of all wines, thee, roseate Aleatico, flower and essence of all the spirit of wine, milk and wine, bloom and sweetness, fire and softness together! This curiosity is not to be drunk, tasted, sipped, or palated; but the man who is blest with it unfolds a new

organ, which may not be described to the ignorant and sober."—Here he broke off with emotion, and dried his eyes.

"So then my presentiment was right," cried Dietrich with enthusiasm: "this is in the realm of wine, what old Eyck or Hemling, perhaps too brother Giovanni di Fiesole, are among painters. Such is the relish of that sweetly moving and deep colouring, which without shade is still so true, without white so dazzling and thrilling. So does the purple of their drapery satiate and intoxicate, and so is its fire allayed and softened by the mild blue, the fancy breeding violet. All is one, and harmonizes in our souls."

"Except Eulenböck's nose," cried the librarian, quite drunk: "that has no touch of scarlet, no transitions in its tones, to blend it with the face; the dark red purple roasts in its magic kitchen, as the beet-root waxes red under ground in the realms of damp night, though quite secluded from the sun. Can this excrement belong to the life? Can the god of wine so have pampered it? Never! It is a clumsy shell, an ugly case for malice and lies."

“Puffy emptiness,” cried the Bookseller, “brittle splendour, frail mortality! And there it stands, curved and tottering on the undermined face, so that with its bulk it may soon press down the whole man in ruins. Man! whence didst get this unconscionably wry nose?”

“Peace, Crocodile!” bawled Eulenböck, violently thumping the table: “will this vermin reform the world? Every nose has its history, ye nostrum-mongers! Do the addle-headed creatures suppose, that the smallest event is not subservient as a link to the necessity of eternal laws? For my nose, as it is, I am indebted to my barber.”

“Tell us, old boy,” cried the young people.

“Patience!” said the painter. “The science of physiognomy will always continue a fallacious one, for the very reason that too little regard is paid to barbers, taverns and other historical circumstances. The face is indeed the expression of the soul, but it suffers remarkably under the way in which it is treated. The brow from its solidity is best off, if a man does not use himself to paint all his little passions, vex-

ation and uneasiness, by folds upon its surface. See how noble is our Edward's, and how much more handsome yet it would be, if the young fellow had thought and employed himself more! The eyes, in consequence of their alertness, running to and fro, likewise preserve themselves tolerably in their play, unless a man weeps them out, like our Crocodile friend there. The mouth now is worse off; that is soon worn down by chattering and unmeaning smiles, as is the case with our worthy librarian; if a man besides wipes it to excess after eating and drinking, its character soon grows undiscernible, especially if from false shame one keeps always curling the lips inward, like our excellent Puritan, who probably pronounces their redness lying and unprofitable parade. But the nose, the poor nose, which puts itself forward above all other parts, which distinguishes us unhappy men from all brutes, in whom mouth and snout meet in such friendly union, and which in man is made, like the Hocken and the Blocksberg, the place for all witches and evil spirits to hold their revels: is it not in most

men, merely on account of the cold air and a catarrh, turned into a cave of Æolus, and hauled, pulled, stretched and touzled, till it becomes a sounding horn and a battle-trumpet? Is not its pliancy and capacity of education abused, to make almost elephants'-trunks and turkey-cocks' bills out of it? More pious souls again press it down and squeeze its arrogance into miserable deformities. All this I saw betimes and spared my nose, yet I could not escape my destiny. I grew up and old with my barber, one of my most intimate friends. This artist, as he turned from one side of my face to the other, used, during this change of position, in order to have a fulcrum, to apply the edge of the razor below to my throat, and pressing and leaning upon this rapidly to gain the other side. This appeared to me alarming. He might slip or stumble, in which case he would in all probability make an incision with the thing supported into its supporter, and my face lie unshaved at his feet. For this a remedy was to be contrived. He meditated, and like a true genius found no difficulty



in altering his system and his manner. That is to say, he grasped my nose with his fingers, which gave him the advantage of being able to support himself and rest much longer upon it, and drew it forcibly upwards, particularly as he was shaving my upper lip, and so we gazed on each other's eyes, one heart close to the other, and the razor worked with a deliberate and steady action. It happened however that my friend had always owned one of the most remarkable faces in the world, which the vulgar is used to call frightful, distorted and ugly; he had besides the habit of making grimaces, and ogled me with such cordiality, that at every sitting I could not help answering him, and, being so close to him, involuntarily imitated his other oddities. If he hauled up my nose to an inordinate height, he in return, in order to reach the corners of my mouth with the instrument of his art, pulled my lips and mouth violently across. When in this mechanical manner he had forced a seeming smile upon my countenance, his laugh met me, so amiable, friendly, cordial and affecting, that often out

of painful sympathy, and merely to stifle a wicked laugh, the tears came into my eyes. ‘Man! Barber friend!’ I exclaimed: ‘withhold that benignant contraction of thy muscles; I am not smiling, thou dost but pull the corners of my mouth apart like a sponge.’ ‘It boots not,’ answered the honest soul, ‘thy winning graces in that smile force me to return them.’ Well, so we grinned at one another like apes for minutes together.

“I observed at the end of twelve weeks a striking alteration in my physiognomy. The nose mounted and towered aloft prodigiously, as if it would proclaim war upon my eyes and forehead, not to take into account the really ugly contortions of the cheeks and lips, which however I could not drop, because I had received them as a memento from my friend. I pressed the aspiring nose down again, and once more represented my wishes to my generous friend. Now however good counsel seemed scarce, and an ‘expedient’ hardly possible. Still he resolved, a second Raphael, to adopt a third unexceptionable manner, and

after a few struggles he succeeded, having beforehand cautiously ascertained towards which side the operation might be most advantageously directed, in twisting my nose as he rested upon it; and at this point we remained stationary, and thus inevitable fate has bent it for me; my true face, towards which my development instinctively tended, has furrowed me with these folds, and deep research and speculation, flaming enthusiasm and glowing love for goodness and excellence, have finally woven this red tissue over the whole."

Loud laughter had accompanied this narrative. The librarian now impetuously demanded Champagne, and the bookseller bawled for punch. Eulenböck, however, cried out, "Oh! ye vulgar souls! After this heavenly ladder which I have made you climb, to take a look into paradise, can so ignoble, mannered, modern and witless a spirit as this punch, as it is called, enter even into the remotest corner of your memory? This wretched brewage of hot water, bad brandy, and lemon acid? And what have we to do in our circle with this di-

plomatic, sober potation, this Champagne? A liquor that does not expand the heart and the intellect, and, after a half debauch, can but serve, at the utmost, to sober one again? Oh! ye profane ones!" He thumped the table; and the rest, with the exception of Edward, answered this gesture so violently, that with the concussion the bottles danced, and several glasses fell in shivers on the floor. Hereupon the laughter and tumult became still louder; a start was made to fetch fresh glasses, and Dietrich cried, "It is grown cold here, cold as ice, and that the punch would remedy."

It was late in the night, the servants had retired, they did not know how to heat the stove again; Edward confessed, too, that his stock of wood was quite at an end, and that he had ordered a fresh one to come in early the next morning. "What think you?" cried Dietrich, quite intoxicated, "our host, we know, has resolved to fit up this room in quite a new style. Suppose we were to break away this useless wainscoting, these boards that cover the windows, and to light a glorious German

fire in the great old-fashioned chimney?" This mad proposition immediately gained a hearing and loud assent from the guests now grown wild, and Edward, who had been the whole evening in a sort of stupefaction, made no opposition. The screen of the fire-place was removed, and then a party ran with lights to the kitchen, to fetch hatchets, bars and other implements. In the anteroom Eulenböck found an old damaged hunting horn, and as he winded it, they marched like soldiers, with bellowing and detestable music, back into the saloon. The table which stood in the way was upset, and immediately there began a hewing, breaking and hammering against the hollow wainscot. Every one strove to surpass the other in diligence, and, to animate the labourers, the painter again blew a charge on the horn, and in the midst of the racket all cried as if they were possessed, "Wood, wood! Fire, fire!" so that this bellowing, the music, the strokes of the hatchets, the cracking of the boards as they broke and burst, threw the host into such a state of dizziness, that he retired in silence into a corner of the room.

On a sudden the company received an addition as unexpected as it was disagreeable. The neighbourhood had been disturbed, and the watch, which had likewise heard the prodigious uproar, now entered, with an officer at its head, having found the house-door open. They inquired the cause of the din, and the meaning of the cry of fire. Edward, who had kept himself tolerably sober, endeavoured to explain every thing to them, in order to excuse his friends. But these, excited and incapable now of a rational thought, treated this visit as a violent encroachment upon their most unalienable rights; every one cried out against the officer, Eulenböck threatened, the bookseller cursed and wept, the librarian fetched a blow with a bar, and Dietrich, who was the most elevated, was for falling on the lieutenant with his hatchet. The latter, likewise a choleric young man, took the matter in earnest, and considered his honour hurt, and so the end of the scene was, that the guests, amidst bawling and uproar, threats and declamations about liberty, were carried off to the head-quarters of the watch. So ended the

feast, and Edward, left alone in the saloon, paced up and down in extreme vexation, and contemplated the havock which his enthusiastic friends had made. Under the overthrown table lay smashed bottles, glasses, plates and dishes, with all that had been left of the savoury cheer; the floor was streaming with the most precious wine; the chandeliers broken to pieces; of those which remained, all the lights, except a single wax taper, were burnt down to the socket, and had gone out. He took the light, and viewed the wainscot from which the tapestry had been torn away, and some strong boards broken down; one beam projected, and barred the entrance to the niche. A singular fancy seized the youth, to continue that same night the work begun by his wild companions; but in order not to make an excessive noise, and perhaps after all share their fate, he took a fine-toothed saw, and cautiously cut through the beam above; he repeated the process below, and took out the block. After this it was not so very difficult to break away a slight inner wainscoting; the thin board fell down,

and Edward held his light into the niche. Scarcely however could he cast a look over the broad space, and catch a glimpse of something that glistened in front of him like gold, when on a sudden all disappeared ; for he had thrust his light against the top of the aperture, and put it out. Startled and in the greatest agitation, he groped his way across the dark saloon, out at the door, through a long passage, and then across the court to a little back building. How angry was he with himself, to have no instruments at hand for striking a light ! He roused out of a sound sleep the hoary porter, who could not for a long time recollect himself, got his taper lighted again after several fruitless attempts, and then returned with cautiously screening hand, trembling in every limb, and with beating heart, along the passages back to the room. He did not know what he had seen, he would not yet believe what he foreboded. In the saloon he first sat down in the arm-chair to collect himself, then lighted some more tapers, and stooping entered the niche. The spacious width of the window



gleamed from top to bottom as in a golden blaze ; for frame crowded on frame, one more gorgeous than the other, and in them all these pictures of his father, over whose supposed loss, old Walther and Erich had so often mourned. Guido's *Salvator Mundi*, Dominichino's *St. John*, all gazed upon him, and he felt himself thrilled with tenderness, devotion, and amazement, as in an enchanted world. When he recovered his recollection, his tears began to flow, and he remained there, heedless of the cold, sitting amidst his new-found treasures, till morning dawned.

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Walther had just risen from table, when Erich hastily came into the picture-saloon to him. "What is the matter with you, my friend?" exclaimed the counsellor: "have you seen a ghost?" "As you take it," replied Erich, "prepare for an extraordinary piece of intelligence."—"Well?"—"What would you give, what would you do in return, if all the lost paintings of your late friend, those invaluable

treasures, were brought to light again, and might become your own?"

"Heaven!" exclaimed the counsellor, changing colour: "I pant for breath. What say you?"—"They are discovered," cried the other, "and may become your property."—"I have no means to buy them," said the counsellor: "but every thing, every thing would I give, to obtain them, my gallery and fortune, but I am too poor for it."—"What if the owner were willing to make them over to you, and required in return merely the favour of becoming your son-in-law?"

Without answering, the old man ran out to find his daughter. They returned in dispute together. "You must make me happy, dear child," he cried as they came in; "on you now depends the felicity of my life." The terrified daughter was going to make farther opposition, but upon a secret nod from Erich, which she thought she understood, seemed at last to give way. She went out, to change her dress; for the pictures and the suitor were waiting for her, as Erich declared, at his house. Amid

what strange thoughts, and expectations, did she select her best attire; "Might she not be mistaken in Erich? Had he understood her? Had she rightly interpreted him?" Walther was impatient, and counted the moments; at last Sophia came back.

In Erich's house all those pictures were hung in the best light, and it would be fruitless to attempt a description of the father's astonishment, joy, and rapture. The pictures were, he asserted, far more beautiful than he had seen them in his recollection. "You say my daughter's admirer is young, well-bred, and of good condition; you give me your word, that he will be a steady man, and never alienate these pictures again after my death? If all this be so, he needs possess no other fortune than these pictures, for he is superabundantly rich. But where is he?"

A side-door opened, and Edward stepped in, in a dress nearly the same as that of his likeness, the shepherd, in the old picture of Quintin Messys.—"He?" cried Walther: "whence have you the pictures?" When Ed-

ward had related the singular occurrence, the old man took the hand of his daughter, and laid it in that of the youth, saying: "Sophia ventures much, but she does it out of love to her father; I presume, my son, you will now have become prudent and good. But, one condition; you live with me, and Eulenböck never crosses my threshold, nor are you ever to set eyes upon him again."

"Certainly not;" answered Edward, "besides he sets off from here to-morrow on his travels with the foreign prince."

They proceeded to the father's house. He led the youth into his library: "Here, young man, you find your curiosities too again, which your whirligig librarian sold me for an old song. In future you will hold these treasures of your father more sacred."

The lovers were happy. When they were alone, Sophia folded the youth tenderly in her arms. "I love thee, Edward, from my heart," she whispered to him, "but I was forced the other day, to give way to my father's humour, and then and to-day to play the part of unqualified

obedience, in order, in the first instance, not to abandon all hope, and to-day to be thine without opposition; for if he had observed my love he would never have given his consent so soon."

Some weeks after, they were married. The youth found no difficulty in becoming a regular and happy man; in the arms of his wife and the circle of his children, he reflected on his wild youth only as a feverish dream. Eulenböck had left the city with the prince, and with him the titular Librarian, who obtained that place of secretary to the prince which Edward had applied for, and some years after married the easy fair one who had caused our young friend such an ill name in his native town, and had almost become the occasion of his ruin.



## THE BETROTHING.

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“I HAVE been long waiting for you,” cried young Ferdinand, as his friend came towards him.

“You know,” replied the other, “that it is impossible to get away in a hurry from our corpulent friend the Baron, when he begins to relate anecdotes of his life.”

“If you were an officer like myself,” answered Ferdinand, “you would nevertheless have found it possible to be punctual; that at least one learns in the service. They are all assembled in the walks yonder, let us make haste, that I may introduce you to this respectable family.”

The young friends turned the corner of a rock, and enjoyed the clear view along the rushing stream, which gleamed as it passed by

the side of the woods and hills. The spring had this year displayed peculiar luxuriance. "How grateful is it to the man of business," said Alfred, "on a day like this, to leave behind him the city and his spiritless occupations, to feel, after long exertion and privation, this blissfulness of nature, and to hear her sacred voice! And how thankful am I to you, my dear friend, for proposing to introduce me into the circle of the best and noblest of men. For however we may strive to form ourselves, however earnestly we may be resolved to study, to collect knowledge, and to enlarge our hearts and affections, still it is intercourse with the pure specimens of human nature, that throws life into this dead, plodding, and rude endeavour, and converts our acquirements into a real treasure. But to the tender sex it is reserved to give to man that degree of cultivation, of which his powers and talents render him capable."

The young officer looked at his friend with a shake of the head, stood still a moment, and then said, as they walked on: "These phrases, which one has been forced to hear thousands



of times, how unable am I to join in them! According to this, it would be the great world, or what is called good company, which a man should seek, in order to attain, under the influence of paltry wit, coquetry, scandal and babble, that maturity which solitude cannot afford us. Though in most things I am of your opinion, yet on this point I must directly differ from you. Women! They it is precisely who seem to have been stationed by a malignant destiny, for the very purpose of reducing man, if he is sufficiently weak, under their dominion; of stripping him of every thing manly, noble, vigorous, and ingenuous, and transforming him, as far as possible, into his opposite, that he may be just good enough to serve them as a contemptible toy. What you were just now expressing, is a mode of thinking which belonged to an age that has now almost gone by, an age, which stood in hostile opposition to truth, but particularly to religious feeling. I must also inform you, that you will not find that style of behaviour, by which our young gentlemen formerly thought they im-

proved themselves, in the society of these women, because with them all is sacred truth, innocence and genuine piety."

His friend endeavoured to justify his opinion and himself, as in animated conversation they briskly pursued their way. They now saw before them the garden, where, in the cool walks, the Baroness, with her family and some select friends, was awaiting their arrival. All felt refreshed and at ease amid the verdant scene.

Only the young counsellor Alfred found a difficulty, at first, in adapting himself to the tone and topics of the company. He was, as is frequently the case, too much on the stretch, to give himself up with ease to the conversation; he had also too much at his heart, which he strove to bring forward with a timidity, by means of which he often confused himself, and was put out by others; for by the time he had digested his thoughts into a speech, the proper moment for introducing it had gone by; and, among the new subjects of conversation, there occurred a multitude of things which seemed to him unintelligible, and on which he was too

bashful to beg more particular information. In addition to this, he was in a manner dazzled by the charms of the ladies; the married daughter Kunigunde was a brilliant beauty; still more radiant was the loveliness of her younger sister Clementine, to which the light complexion and girlish physiognomy of the youngest, miss Clara, formed a sweet contrast; the mother herself might still make pretensions to a pleasing person, and it was evident that she had been in her youth a beautiful woman. Dorothea, the eldest daughter, attracted the least attention in this circle, beautiful as was her eye, and delicate as was her shape; she herself shrank back, and kept still and shy; she seemed even to take but little interest in the animated conversation of her sisters, and it was remarkable that no speech or question was addressed to her, notwithstanding the pains which all the men in the company took to ingratiate themselves with the other daughters or the mother.

Among the men, there distinguished himself an elderly person, who generally took the lead in the conversation, gave information to

every body, and decided all disputed or doubtful cases. Even the officer treated him with submissive humility, and this friend of the family addressed himself with kindness and condescension to all, asking them questions, setting them right, animating them, and endeavouring, in his way, to encourage or enlighten every one. He succeeded too at last in drawing the embarrassed Alfred into the conversation, and his gratitude vented itself in a glowing speech, which he now found an opportunity of introducing, and in which he unfolded his wish for improvement, his reverence for domestic happiness, and his hope that the genuine religious temper and true piety would diffuse themselves throughout Germany, with general approbation and to his own satisfaction.

The most attentive of all had been the fair Kunigunde, and she it was who most loudly expressed her approbation. "How fortunate are we," she at last concluded, "to assemble in our dear circle more and more of those spirits, who aim at what is good and noble; who have a perception of something above the

earthly, and to whom the world, with all its alluring treasures, appears but vanity. But it is the property of truth and goodness to attract better natures, and to sublimate the weak. While social intercourse has this happy effect in a larger sphere, it is, in the confined domestic circle, the blissfulness of wedlock, that kindles in the souls which it unites a still more fervent enthusiasm for every thing divine, which here still more powerfully raises the weaker spirit to the love of the infinite Being."

"Yes indeed," said a young man, who sat by the elderly gentleman, "this is what I feel every day more intensely and thankfully." He sighed and looked at the clouds, and the counsellor learnt upon inquiry, that this was the husband of the lovely and pious Kunigunde.

The mother took up the theme and said, not without emotion, "How happy I needs must feel, thus to have found in the circle of my children the highest end of life, and to have enabled them also to attain the noblest acquisition this earth can yield. How utterly unable I am to take an interest in the pursuits of the

generality of mankind! Nay, I rather feel my pity moved by the various turns of their enthusiasm, than could find, in that multiplicity of exertions to attain what they call a good, any thing that claims our respect. So they run after art, or philosophy; suppose that the eternal light is to dawn upon them in science, or in colour and sound; weary themselves with history and the perplexed affairs of life; and in their eagerness neglect the one thing needful, which supplies and makes up for all beside. Since I have found this spring which so sweetly satiates every thirst of the soul, I have had no sense left for that motley variety of objects, towards which in my youth I myself turned many a longing look."

"How you force my admiration!" exclaimed the counsellor: "with what eagerness have I sought life, and grasped only an empty shadow! And yet how easy is it, to find that truth, which never deceives us, never slips away from us, which fills every desire of the heart, that in which alone we have real life and being."

"I understand you," answered the Baroness,

“ You belong to our circle ; it is a blessed thing to feel, that the communion of pious and heavenly-minded spirits is constantly increasing.”

“ We have a prospect of the most glorious times !” exclaimed the young officer in a rapture. “ And how blest we must feel ourselves, since that which elevates us above the stale routine of life, is eternal truth itself ; since this it is which rules us, and under its control we can never miscarry, never err ; for we surrender ourselves to love, to work in us and reveal its mysteries to our hearts.”

“ Precisely so,” concluded the dignified elderly gentleman ; “ this it is, which gives us that assurance which distinguishes us from ordinary enthusiasts or fanatics. You have spoken a great truth, my dear Ferdinand, and it is on this account I value you so highly. No one finds the right point by so direct a road as yourself, and no one can then express it so clearly and simply.” He embraced the young man, looked towards heaven, and a big tear sparkled in his fine dark eye. The Baroness rose, and joined the group ; all were moved,

only Miss Dorothea turned away, and seemed to be searching for something she had lost in the shrubbery.

It did not escape Alfred's attention, that the mother looked with an expression of pain towards her eldest child, who seemed strangely excluded from this circle of sympathy and love. Baron Wallen, that was the name of the elderly friend of the house, with an air of melting benignity approached the young lady, who timidly cast her eyes to the ground, and whose cheeks at the same instant were flushed with a crimson glow. He spoke to her in an under-tone and with great emotion, but in her embarrassment she seemed not to pay particular attention to his words; for a lady now coming along the walk towards the party, she went hastily to meet her, and folded her in her arms with the greatest cordiality and joy.

The mother slightly shook her head, and looked at Baron Wallen with an inquiring eye; he smiled, and the conversation of the party turned to quite different and commonplace topics; for Madame von Halden, who now came



up, chattering loudly, laughing and telling news, made all flights of rapture, every communication of sentiment perfectly impossible, so that all but Miss Dorothea were rather disconcerted; she, as if she was relieved and cheered, hung with her looks on the speaker's lips, and now paid still less attention to the rest of the company.

“Who then is this retailer of news?” asked Alfred, displeased, “that, like a wild bird, flies into our quiet circle, and scares away all delicate feelings?”

“A neighbour of our honoured Baroness,” answered Baron von Wallen: “she has gained an incomprehensible influence over the mind of Miss Dorothea, which we all cannot but lament. Even in her earlier years, her excellent governess, Miss von Erhard, a relative of the family, endeavoured to prevent this intimacy from stifling the lovely girl's better capacities; but from first to last all her pains have been unavailing.”

The governess, who had hitherto been little observed, now came up, seeing that she was the subject of remark, and joined in the con-

versation. She related how, in this affectionate and lofty-minded family, Dorothea had from her early youth led a secluded life, and among so many sisters had been in a manner quite alone. Miss Charlotte von Erhard told this with a rough and hoarse voice, but was so agitated that she could not refrain from tears. Alfred, who was already softened, in his exalted mood thought the elderly and rather ugly lady amiable and agreeable, and hearty disgust and vehement contempt were pointed against poor Dorothea, who now took leave of her gossiping friend, and returned to the rest of the party. She was evidently in a serener mood, but one could see what a struggle it cost her, again to take part in the serious conversation. She mentioned that Madame von Halden was in treaty, and would probably sell her estate.

“Sell her estate?” asked the mother astonished, “and she could nevertheless be so cheerful, nay, so gay?”

“She thinks,” replied Dorothea, “she ought not to reject so advantageous a bargain on account of her infant children.”

“Is there any advantage,” said the mother, “which can counterbalance to children the happiness of home? And she herself, your friend, who grew up here upon her estate, who lived here with parents and brothers and sisters, and afterwards with a beloved husband, how can she thus become a voluntary outcast, and turn her back upon these trees, banish herself from the rooms which she loved and was familiar with as a child? Again and again I am struck with observing how utterly unintelligible to me are the conduct and motives of the great majority of mankind.—And who, then, is the purchaser?”

“The thing is odd enough,” replied Dorothea; “the purchaser will not have his name published; but one Count Brandenstein conducts the negotiation. My friend is eager and decided, for the foreigner from America is buying several other estates, so that she esteems it a privilege, as he does not look minutely at the price, to be able to dispose of hers to the stranger.”

At the name of Brandenstein the mother

turned pale. She endeavoured however to compose herself directly, and said after a little pause, "Ay, that was the name which has been lying, for a week past, heavy upon my heart. I was already aware that this man is here, who will now for some time spoil our quiet enjoyment, and disturb the harmony of our circle. And I cannot avoid seeing him, for he is an old acquaintance of our family, and the custom of the world forces us, we know, to maintain a friendly intercourse even with persons whom we most heartily dislike, nay, whom, however candid may be our thoughts, we cannot help acknowledging to be bad and profligate men."

Dorothea was of opinion that, where so distinct a feeling prevailed, a man ought to put no constraint upon himself; and that particularly in the country, where they lived, it would be still easier than in town, to avoid such offensive intrusions. The mother however said, "You do not understand this, my child. Were it not that an unconscientious unprincipled man might injure or mortify us in the most sensible manner; were it not that he had it in his power,

by means of wit and frivolity, to embitter our whole existence, I would coldly repel him, and, with my love of truth, tell him without ceremony, that I would keep up no commerce with him; but as this is impossible, I must treat him with courtesy, endeavour to lay the evil spirit in him by delicacy and good-will, and afterwards, as imperceptibly as possible, withdraw from his pernicious influence."

The other daughters crowded round the mother and embraced her, as if to console her. "If I had not you!" sighed the Baroness: "if it were not that I may calculate on the assistance of our generous friend, the visit of this godless man would make me still more uneasy."

"Who is he, after all?" asked the Baron.

"A man" answered the mother, "who, at an early age, ranged about in the world, and among its snares; who, taught by his own heart, vilely ridicules and persecutes all that bears the name of charity, meekness and piety, a gross self-seeker, incapable of loving any one, and whom the Holy, the Unearthly, wherever he perceives it, wherever he does but catch a

glimpse of it, transports into a disgusting rage, which then inspires him with that frivolous wit, which we all so deeply despise. It was the misfortune of my life, that he formed an acquaintance with my good departed husband, who took a liking to him, and in many gloomy hours abandoned himself to his society and his melancholy philosophy."

"You are painting, honoured madam," said the officer, "one of those characters, which, heaven be thanked, have already grown more rare."

"A profligacy," said the Baron, "which rails at every thing spiritual, being grounded on self-contempt. You however, as well as all of us, are raised above this misery."

"His moderate fortune," proceeded the mother, "was soon spent; he then quitted Europe, roamed about among heaven knows what savage hordes, and has now returned, I hear, as the agent of an immensely rich American, who will follow him in the course of a year, and who has taken the fancy of buying several estates in our neighbourhood, to form one large domain."

Dorothea still persisted in her opinion, that people might and ought to avoid so bad a man, and that she herself would engage to make the house unapproachable to him, if her mother would give her the requisite powers for the purpose; the Baroness however grew displeased, and forbad the name of the peace-breaker to be mentioned that day any more. The carriages now drew up, the family meaning to return to their country-seat in the neighbourhood in the cool of the evening, when at the same moment a singular scene displayed itself. The old Baron had already several times approached Dorothea, who however had avoided him, but he took advantage of the moment when he was helping her into the carriage, to whisper some friendly words into her ear; she sprang back, got hastily away from the coach, and ran down the shaded walk. The Baron could not overtake her in spite of all his efforts; when he was at the bottom of the garden, she came back out of breath, threw her veil over her heated face, and wept bitterly as she timidly shrank from the interrogating and reproving

glances of her more than astonished mother. The carriage drove rapidly off, and the Baron, after he had taken a confused and embarrassed leave of his young friends got into his own, severely mortified, as his looks shewed, notwithstanding his attempts at a forced composure.

When the young counsellor and the officer were on their way back to the city, the former said after a pause, "What was that? I cannot recover from my surprize, that, among persons of such refinement and delicacy, so indecorous a scene could have occurred! In fact, how comes this girl, this singular, even repulsive character, into a family, which I should be almost inclined to call a holy one? Some deep culpability must bow her down, that she always shrinks timidly back, never takes a share in the conversation, and is treated too by all the rest with a condescending, almost a contemptuous pity, which is very striking to a stranger. One is forced into scandalous conjectures, however little one may be inclined to suspicion."

"You would however be mistaken," said his military friend, "for no fault, no offence bows



this being down. Among persons of such lofty character as all these are, a failure of that sort might perhaps be repaired without any great struggle, did there but subsist a harmony of soul, in other respects, between this sister and the rest. But the worst of all is, that she was born with a more groveling ignoble spirit, that does not comprehend the aim of all the rest, and still is forced to confess that it is something lofty and noble, only for her unattainable. This feeling of unworthiness depresses her more than the consciousness of a fault could do. She feels herself an alien among her nearest relations, a stranger in her own house; she seeks relief in the company of her unworthy acquaintances, of that porsy and gossiping neighbour for instance, and particularly shuns the Baron, whom we all so highly revere, and who condescends too much, with almost a degree of passion, to unfold her sensibilities for a higher state of being."

They now turned the corner of the rock, and saw the city lying before them. But to their horror they at the same time observed that cor-

pulent Baron von Willen, from whom, in the afternoon, the young counsellor had with difficulty got away. "Well," cried he as they came towards him, "are you come back already out of heaven? Has there been a fine shower of ambrosial phrases? Did the nectarean sentiments take kindly? There was no scarcity, I hope, of seraphic feelings?"

The friends, who amid the beauties of nature and in the lovely evening would have been glad to indulge their feelings in harmonious reminiscences, endeavoured to get rid of him, but as they were returning by the same road to the city, this was impossible. "Not so fast!" he exclaimed with a peremptory voice: "we remain steadfast together, and at the spring below there we shall meet with another poor sinner, who is waiting for me."

The two young people saw themselves forced to make a virtue of necessity, particularly as the insensible Baron proceeded with a boisterous voice: "I observe well enough, that you would like still to be sentimental in the environs here, particularly as the moon will soon make its ap-

pearance ; but such disorders are not tolerated in my prosaic company. Take my word for it, young men, all that etherializing, and that luscious piety yonder, has no other object, than that you should bite at this tempting bait in the way of marriage, provided, that is, you have places and fortune. There are so many daughters there, and only the eldest, a wild thing, is mad enough to reject all offers. Ay, that it is, the dear, good, much-desired matrimony, the wooing, towards which all the telescopes are pointed, when such fine noble daughters are sitting in the family saloon, round and plump, red and white, comely and clever, full-grown and finished ! And in the midst of them the prudent mother, on the alert, lurking and watching, her eyes turned in every direction, her feelers out, to try every one that enters, whether the fine coat is paid for, whether he that talks of his travels and balls, is in condition to maintain a wife suitably to her quality. Then drop from the good matron's tender lips such pious, soft, and perfectly undesigning phrases, her looks glance towards heaven, and to the

right and left, and all the words and all the looks swim like a hundred hooks in the stream of the insipid conversation, and the youngsters shoot, now after this, now after that line, wriggling and playing, till, at last, though it be some weeks first, one or other of them is fastened. So they have hooked for Kunigunde that delicate whiting, and forthwith put it into his head that the plump girl is a great deal too good for him, so that he pulls like a repentant sinner at the car of matrimony, and cannot help feeling himself honoured, that the lofty being has stooped to him; now Clara, Clementine, and the earthly-minded Dorothea are still to be settled, nay I will not warrant, that the well-stricken proselyte-maker herself does not one of these days shape her a bridegroom out of some pious stripling, and shuffle a settlement into his hands instead of the catechism. Ay, ay! For better, for worse! How all the world scampers, as if they were blind and deaf, under the melancholy yoke, and sacrifice freedom and fancy to the evil genius, which almost always debases a man into a slave."

“ You are an abominable scoffer,” said the officer; “ out of a libertine humour you hate marriage, and desire now that all men should live as licentious freethinking bachelors, and because your taste is not suited to that circle, you slander those persons, who are exalted above every calumny.”

“ Quite martial!” cried the Baron. “ And yet I shall prove to be right, and perhaps you yourself, sooner or later, when you are forced, like a squirrel, to make the same orthodox springs over and over again at the end of your chain, in order to crack the nuts which your wife allows you, will sigh, “ Ah! had I but believed my resolute friend Willen!”

“ No, sir,” said the counsellor with warmth, “ your view of the subject proceeds from nothing but despair : nay, you do not even believe yourself.”

“ For aught I care,” cried the other, “ it may be that a creature totally different from myself is speaking out of me; for that is often the case in life, and, even among those apostolical folks themselves, there often peeps a

something like an ape, out of their fringed and stiffened drapery. Is it not so? Especially out of that elderly maiden, the too unworldly Miss Erhard, that incomparable mistress of the art of education? She has set the pattern of a close cap of inward sentiment for the whole family, while for herself she has fitted a head-dress of religion after the most flourishing fashion. You think when she crows out her oracle, and twists her little eyes, we unbelievers must immediately truckle under. It is with her I am most out of patience, for she it is in fact that has radically ruined the whole family."

They were now standing at the spring. The sun had long set, and a man was seen winding out of the darkness from behind the willow bush. "Ah! Michael!" cried the Baron. "May you have occasion, gentlemen, for an honest servant?"

"Why," asked the officer, "have you quitted the service of the excellent Baroness, who takes such maternal care of her people?"

"Ah! your honour," said the servant, "be-

cause the other day I told a little bit of a harmless fib, I was directly turned off."

"That is as it should be!" cried the officer, "there I recognize that noble-minded woman."

"All was but a plot," proceeded Michael, "of that spiteful Miss Erhard: she cannot bear that man and maid should be kind to each other, because nobody will release her from her single life, and ever since she saw me give the housemaid a kiss, a month ago it was, she has borne me a grudge for it."

"How vulgar!" exclaimed Alfred.

"Yes, your honour," said the man, "she is not a fine lady, but she is pretty, and a kiss is a kiss after all. Now one day, that was on the maid's account too, I had forgotten to fetch a new book from town, it was one of the double-refined pious sort, I believe, and, in my quandary, I said the book was already lent, and it came out that I had not gone at all, and so, for that bit of a lie, I was immediately dismissed the service."

"Have you occasion for him?" the Baron asked the two young people. They however

protested, they would never have to do with a man, who could not even be endured in the most liberal and indulgent of families. "Well then, stay in the mean time with me," concluded the Baron, "but lie as little as possible."

"Certainly, your honour," cried the man, "of set purpose never; there often comes across one in one's straits a forced lie, which the old priest in my village yonder himself thought excusable; but their honours, my mistresses, weigh every thing in scales of gold; and in a house where there is nothing to be seen but the quintessence of piety, and virtue in full trim, a poor ordinary servant does not get on at all. We have too much earth in us, my good sirs, the gentlefolk have easier work of it, that are always polishing and polishing at heart and soul, which is what we have no time for, by reason of knife-cleaning and other jobs. Miss Dorothy wanted to excuse me, and said it did not matter so much; but she came badly off, they all cried out together upon her, more than upon me. Her they all despise, and yet she is the best of the family, because she is not so



highflown, for man after all was formed out of a lump of earth, and the old loam and clay will be stirring in him from time to time."

"You are well paired, you and Michael," said the officer laughing.

"But stop!" cried the Baron, "I have taken you into my service, and quite forgot, that tomorrow Miss Erhard is coming for some time to my house. Yes, my friends, she is a person whom I myself cannot endure; but as I live with a younger sister who is now grown up, and many men are going in and out of my house, and I am myself often from home, I am forced, as I have no mind to marry, to have company and superintendence for her. Now has the preposterous little woman resolved to make a trial with me, for she knows well enough that it is good quartering in my house, not so meagre as in the family yonder; besides I often see company, perhaps she thinks she may find a bosom companion more easily with me, than in the solitude there. So we are to make a trial for a month or so together."

"All construed with a very refinement of

vulgarity!" said the counsellor: "if you can but find petty motives, you comprehend things."

"No help for it," said the Baron. They parted, having just reached the city gate.

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The next morning, at an early hour, there was a great stir in the house of the Baroness. The whole family was assembled at sunrise in the great parlour, which led immediately into the garden. The walls were hung with festoons of flowers, an ornamented table stood at one door, covered with clothes, books, and various keepsakes, and they were now only waiting for the eldest daughter Dorothea, who was in the habit of visiting the garden every day at a very early hour, in order, with these presents, and this festive show, to give her an agreeable surprize. It was her birthday, and the mother and daughters had been able to arrange every thing without her observing it, as she never concerned herself particularly about the almanack. She now came down the garden, and saw from a distance her assembled sisters. When

she entered the room in astonishment, and they all kindly surrounded her, offering their respective presents, and her sisters and mother showed themselves so unusually loving, she was deeply affected, and her agitation was the greater, the less she had expected this festival of love.

“How new is this to me!” she exclaimed. “Alas! how little have I been able to deserve this of you! Do you then indeed love me so? All these presents, this brilliant display, this kind attention, how can I requite it? I am so surprized, that you should all think so of a poor thing like me, that I cannot even find words to thank you.”

“Only love us with sincere affection,” said her mother, cordially embracing her, “do not keep so much apart from us, meet more tenderly all our advances, do justice to our intentions and strive to enter into our feelings and views; for we surely seek only what is good, we surely wish only what is right. These humours of yours, my beloved child, your forward temper, which estranges you from your friends and sisters, and carries you into the

arms of trifling persons, is a disease and perversion of your character. You may and will perceive the truth as soon as it is your serious purpose."

"I will amend," said the weeping daughter. "I promise it you from this very hour, which so infinitely affects me."

All embraced and kissed her, and Dorothea, who had been long as it were a stranger in her family, felt as if a new life had begun for her. She looked searchingly at all, she caressed every one, she let the presents be shown and explained to her; it seemed as though she had returned from a long journey, and were now greeting her family after a painful separation. "If I could but do anything for you all!" she exclaimed.

"If it is your serious will," answered her mother, "it is in your power to-day to make all of us, and especially me, indescribably happy."

"Name it," cried Dorothea, "say what I am to do."

"If on this solemn day," proceeded the Baroness, "you would at last give your long-

refused consent, if you would this day bless with your plighted word our friend Wallen, whom you yesterday mortified in so improper a manner."

Dorothea turned pale, and shrank back aghast. "Is this what you require?" said she faltering; "I thought on that subject I had once for all made my declaration."

"Your passionate mood," said the mother, "cannot pass for a rational resolution. You love no man, as you have often said, you scarcely know one whom you could esteem; this generous friend is devoted to you with a noble ardour, he proposes to you a lot, fairer than will ever again present itself to you, should you now reject it; you know the situation of your family, the critical state of our property; it is in your power to become the benefactress of your mother, the protectress of your sisters. Have you well reflected, my dear child, how cheerless your own future prospects will be, if you should persist in your obstinacy? Forsaken by men and women, in discord and enmity with your family, lonely and utterly lost

in a cold, insulting world, poor and without succour! Will you not then review your youth with regret, and in bitter anguish repent, that you so wantonly, so thoughtlessly, rejected all happiness for yourself and your family? Does this generous man then require from you love and passion, as they are described in our perverse books? Does he wish for more than friendship and esteem? And can you refuse him this? He is ready for all sacrifices, which our pressing situation requires, and which his great wealth enables him to make. But if you treat him with such cold scorn, and he withdraws offended and affronted — who knows where your sisters or your mother, and you yourself, at some time or other in your old age, may be forced to beg a pitiful alms, where I may lay my head sick and helpless? and then will your weeping eye cast back a look of vain regret upon these days, which will be then for ever past.”

“ Say no more, my dearest mother!” cried Dorothea in the greatest distress. “ Oh, unhappily, unhappily, the right is all on your

side, and the wrong entirely on mine. No, I never yet loved, and never shall, my heart is locked against that feeling; the men, with whom I have been acquainted, inspire me all with a feeling of dislike, many with one of pity, not to say contempt. I perceive that a marriage founded on reason, which places us in a state of opulence and independence, must be a desirable thing; that it is in my power to make you and all of us happy by a single word, that it is certainly generous to speak it, that it is perhaps forced from me by necessity, by filial duty, and the noblest motives—and yet—why do my feelings shudder at it?—Ah, my dear mother, if it were not for just one thing,—may I say it? Will you not quite misunderstand me? O certainly! for I really do not understand myself.”

“Speak, my beloved child,” said her mother in the kindest tone, “I shall feel your heart, though I do not quite comprehend your words.”

Dorothea hesitated, looked at her beseechingly, and said at last, in embarrassment, and with a beseeching voice: “Often have I put

the question to myself, in hours of solitude I have earnestly examined myself, and then it appeared to me, as if I could join hands with the worthy man, whom you all, whom all the world respects, were he only not——

“ Well?” cried the mother.

“ Were he only not pious,” said the daughter hastily.

A long pause of embarrassment ensued. Dorothea's face had turned of a glowing red, the sisters shrank back in affright, the mother cast a look downwards, and then turned it with the severer scrutiny on the poor girl, who seemed to all, and to herself, almost a monster. At last the mother said: “ Well, really, I cannot help feeling surprized at this, and if I understand what you have expressed, it would be enough to fill me with horror. So then you make open profession of your apostasy from God? You are conscious then, that every thing holy is an offence and an abomination to you? You cannot love what is love itself? Go then and deny every thing divine, live a reprobate and die forsaken by heaven.”



“ You do not understand me,” cried Dorothea with deep indignation : “ it is the very misfortune of my life, that every thing is misunderstood in me, however well I mean it. Perhaps M. von Wallen would be quite to my mind, if only I did not know that he is so pious, perhaps even I might then think him pious.”

“ Excellent !” said the mother in a painful state of irritation : “ when we are ourselves depraved, it is certainly most convenient to doubt the virtue of persons of worth. Herein at the same time you express, what you think of me, and what I have to expect from your filial affection !”

“ You must, you shall find your error !” cried Dorothea, almost angry : “ I will do more for love of you, than I can justify to myself. I will this evening, I give you my word, betroth myself to Baron von Wallen.”

A general burst of joy, tears, embraces and sobbings, interrupted and filled up the place of conversation. The dispute changed into the loudest and most joyous hubbub ; all had lost their composure, and expressed love and rap-

ture in vehement and exaggerated terms. Only Dorothea, after her last words, had suddenly grown quite cool again, and gave herself up quietly without any return to their caresses.

“Oh, my beloved child!” said the mother when she had at last recovered her composure, “yes, I misunderstood you, and you will excuse me; this unexpected voluntary declaration sets all right again. And now I may add to those gifts of love the most beautiful and costly present, these ornaments, which the Baron sends you. I kept it back, because I really doubted of your noble feelings.”

The daughter stared at her mother, then cast a cold glance at the precious stones, and laid them calmly down by the flowers on the table. Breakfast was served, and after the loud scene followed the deeper calm; no conversation could be brought to bear. The bell rang for church, and the servants brought the cloaks and books. Dorothea laid her prayer-book down, and said: “You will excuse me, dear mother, if I do not to-day accompany you to church, I am too much excited; I will endeavour, in the meanwhile,

to collect myself here, and prepare for our dinner-party, and still more for the evening."

"As you will, my sweet child," answered the Baroness. "It is true that the church, and the discourse of our pious pastor, would certainly be the most natural place and occasion for collecting your thoughts; nevertheless you have a way and fashion of your own, keep it then wholly uncriticized. It is evidently Heaven itself, which leads you, my love, who are most in need of it, to our dear friend Wallen; by his side you will learn to think differently, and perhaps I may still live to see you shame us all, and shine before us in a superior lustre."

When Dorothea saw herself alone, she examined, almost unconsciously, the presents. The glittering richly bound books were of that modern religious class in which she had never been able to take an interest. "What matters it?" said she to herself: "is the earth itself then, is the sum of life so much worth the talking of? Why do I persist in playing the part assigned to me with so much reluctance? What in earlier days I thought and planned, is to be sure only a

dream and empty fancy! I see indeed how all men, all, do but act and counterfeit an elevation of soul, from which they afterwards willingly and placidly sink into common-place. If it is the universal destiny, why do I persist in struggling so vehemently against it? Horrible it is! But at last, sooner or later, death is sure to unravel this tangled net of life, and on the other side the grave there surely will be freedom."

With her mood the heavens too grew more gloomy. Dark massy clouds rolled along, and seemed to be bringing a storm with them. A tall man came up the garden and approached the parlour. As he was on the point of stepping in, she advanced to meet the stranger, who seemed to be a person of condition. They exchanged compliments, and the stranger begged leave to stay; "he had given his horse to a servant in the avenue, and had then stepped into the garden which he found open;" he regretted not finding the rest of the family; whereupon Dorothea invited him to wait in the parlour till the storm had past, and to stay till her mother and sisters returned from church.

“ You seem not to be alarmed at the storm ;” observed the stranger. 1

“ Yes indeed,” replied Dorothea, “ when it comes too near, and the flash and the stroke are one. I believe too that all men then are more or less afraid ; for where there is no possibility of resistance, where a sudden unforeseen moment might snatch me away, I am uneasy precisely because I cannot be on my guard. In these moments nothing gives tranquillity but the belief in an inevitable fate, and the reflexion that I am no better than the thousands of my fellow-men who are exposed to the same danger.”

“ This is a frame of mind,” said the stranger, “ which I cannot but call courageous, contrasting it with that weak one which is not uncommon among ladies, when they almost faint for fear, lose all composure, and weep and wail, if but the most distant flash of lightning does but gleam across.”

“ Yes,” said Dorothea, “ and indeed I am apprehensive about my mother and sisters, who are but too susceptible of alarm. I would

not blame it, because like many other nervous fears, it may be a disorder of the body."

"That is a point not so easily decided," observed the stranger, "because it would be first necessary to make a serious trial, what strength of will is able to effect, and whether, when the soul puts a constraint upon itself, the body does not also take some steps with it, and health does not arise of itself where nothing but a wilful mood has engendered the disease."

"That leads to the question," said Dorothea, "how far we are free, and what we are able to effect by resolution in mind and body."

"Certainly," replied the other, "and not only this, but all serious reflexions lead to the great question. Without having answered this to ourselves, we can take an interest in nothing, and can believe neither in ourselves nor in others."

"Freedom!" sighed Dorothea, as if in a reverie, "You believe in it then? I did so too formerly, when I was younger."—

"Younger, my young lady? That sounds strange from your lovely lips. I doubted as a

youth, and have only learnt to form this conviction in later years."

"Excuse me," cried Dorothea confused, "for losing myself with you on such topics, as I"—

The stranger interrupted her: "Do not treat me as a young man, of whom you know nothing, and who is only at liberty to take notice of your presence, in order to say some obliging things to you. You met me with a noble and serious confidence, and I know that I am not undeserving of it."

And really it seemed as if Dorothea was speaking with an old acquaintance or a brother, so little was this man—whose name even she forgot to inquire—strange to her. It was long since she had experienced this feeling, of venturing to express her thoughts without fear of being misunderstood; it gave her so much satisfaction that she paid but little regard to the storm, and even forgot the evening, which just before she could only think of with horror. In the course of the conversation the stranger gave an account of his travels and several of his vicissitudes; he recalled the remembrance

of his youth, and at last acknowledged, that he had often seen the house in which they were, and particularly the young lady's father, who had been many years dead. "You are wonderfully like your father," he concluded, "and from the very first I could not contemplate those mild lineaments without emotion."

Dorothea was taken by surprize, when she saw the family already returned from church. On saluting the stranger, the mother stepped back almost in terror, and Dorothea turned pale when she heard him called Count Brandenstein. He was politely invited to dinner, and old Baron Wallen likewise made his appearance, as well as Alfred and the young officer; both had ridden over from town. The family went to dress, and Dorothea alone in her chamber was lost in deep thought. The world lay in a more singular shape than ever before her mind; she could scarcely recover herself sufficiently to arrange her simple attire, and when she afterwards returned as in a dream to the company, all their faces seemed to her in a manner hard and strained, nay even



strange, but especially the soft, sanctimonious countenance of the Baron looked like a hideous caricature, and a sensation, as if she were on the point of laughing, took possession of her whole frame like a shivering fit, when she remembered that this was the man to whom that same evening she was to plight her troth. As the young officer and the counsellor were revolting to her, just so familiar, open and benign, was the expression which beamed upon her in the looks of the Count, whom but the day before she had heard described as a bad and dangerous man.

He seemed the only person at table who was unconcerned. He spoke with satisfaction of the affairs he was transacting on behalf of his American friend; he mentioned the estates he had already purchased, or for which he was in treaty; and much surprize was excited by the wealth of the stranger, who was able to consolidate the finest estates in the country in one large domain. By the Count's address the conversation soon became more free, and the Baron, who seemed to be resisting

with violence the feeling which pressed upon him, endeavoured to engross and command it, principally no doubt that the young people and the lady of the house might not slacken in their wonted homage.

But as it often happens, that conversation, if it is not conducted with easy unconcern and delicate tact, is led, by arrogance and vehemence, to assume a polemical character, such was the case here; for the speeches and expressions of the Baron were all disguised attacks on the Count and his opinions, such as he conceived them from the description he had heard of him. The Count took little notice at first of these intimations; he conversed principally with Dorothea, who sat by his side, spoke of his affairs, and at last said as if in jest, that he had at the same time received a commission from his American friend to look out for a wife for him.

“That you cannot surely either of you mean in earnest,” said the Baroness.

“And why not?” answered the Count in a sprightly humour; “My friend in this only

imitates the custom of sovereign princes, to treat by ambassadors, and according to political considerations. He is now no longer young, and cannot expect to excite passion; he has had in his youth a great deal of melancholy experience, and his own misfortune, as well as the fate of many of his friends, has convinced him, that what men call love, is but an unmanly craving, often vanity, sometimes even infatuation, and that most marriages which are contracted in seeming passion, bring on but a joyless, most fretful life, often wretchedness. I am his most intimate friend, and he calculates on my knowledge of mankind for drawing him a lot which will suit him."

The Baron replied, that he still thought such an undertaking a critical one, and that the stranger was certainly placing the happiness of his life at stake.

"Happiness?" the Count repeated the word: "certainly, if he had conceived that idea of something unqualified, infinite, and inexpressible, which young people usually associate with the word. Where do you find this?"

Whoever does not know how to confine himself will attain nothing, least of all what lies beyond all bounds. Resignation may seem bitter at first, but without it no state of life is endurable; for, if we would but deal ingenuously with ourselves, all raptures must, in the first instance, make way for melancholy, nay they are identical with it; and Beauty, Art, Enthusiasm, every thing, exists for us earthly perishable men, only so far as it is perishable, though the root of every thing that is divine rests in eternity."

"Singular!" said the Baron: "according to this even devotion and piety, the perception of heavenly things, would be subject to this change?"

"I believe," said the Count, "whoever will not stoop to earth, cannot soar to heaven; night and day, sleep and waking, elevation and indifference, must take their turns. We complain with reason that it is and must be so; it cannot however be helped; but one who should make the influxes of devotion, the raptures of celestial love, a standing article in his heart, is pro-

bably in one of the most dangerous positions on which a man can venture."

"You are notorious as a freethinker," answered the mother, "and you will not succeed in clouding our clear conviction."

Kunigunde said with a melting accent, "You think then that it is dangerous to love the Lord?"

Brandenstein could not help smiling: "Dangerous like all love, fair lady," replied he playfully, "especially if one does not know the object one undertakes to love, or conceives an incorrect notion of it; still worse, if we form out of it a phantom, that is to strengthen all our prejudices, justify us in our weaknesses and sanction our faults and errors. In that case we might perhaps be giving away our foolish hearts to a spectre, such as some of the old legends tell of, and be struck with horror, when, in a moment of illumination, the real form of divinity appeared to us."

Dorothea listened with attention, and the Baron said with some ill humour: "Love cannot

err; where else should we seek a guide for our path?"

"If it is the true love, it cannot," replied the Count; "but in this we too easily deceive ourselves; for if our passions were not sophists, they would in fact not be passions."

"So then doubt," said the Baron angrily, "is the only thing we can gain."

"Let it be considered as our servant," answered the Count, "who explores our road; our fool, to warn us with his dry jest against excess and precipitation. Children and fools, the popular proverb says, speak the truth; sometimes at least, if not often and always."

"A mother," said the Baroness, "knows what love is; a man retains perhaps always but a dim dubious conception of its power. The act too is always more than the word, and so have I brought up my children and lived with them, wholly in love, requiring from them no blind obedience, never anything unreasonable; I have ever sacrificed myself to them; but even in their lisps they have recognized and

returned my love; they have only needed to follow their hearts, and rigour, fear, and every thing of that sort, has been always wholly unknown to them."

The daughters looked tenderly at their mother, the mother had tears in her eyes, only Dorothea looked timidly downwards, and the Baron said in a fit of rapture, "All the world knows and reveres this model of education, and if any one doubts the power of love, let him come and see this family circle."

"Far be from me," said Brandenstein, turning himself to Dorothea, "the rudeness of feeling which would refuse to acknowledge this tender love; I only think, when I recall to mind my happy childhood, that love to parents, and a certain religious and liberal fear of them should be one and the same thing; for by means of the latter alone my childish love acquired, I think, its true force and intensity; it is this holy awe too of something incomprehensible in the parents, that should produce that blind unqualified obedience, which is the very thing wherein the child feels itself so happy; for with-

out this obedience, it appears to me, neither education nor love are possible."

The mother looked apprehensively at her eldest daughter, who seemed to be of the same opinion, and then said with a rather pointed tone: "I preferred convincing my children at an early age, and where that was impossible, I so disposed them, that they did for my sake what they could not perceive to be proper."

"I respect your mode of education," said the Count, "for who in this lovely circle could have the heart to impugn it? Yet perhaps these expedients may be rather too costly substitutes for that plain and cheap obedience."

The Baron addressed himself in ill humour to Alfred, and the conversation took a different turn. The young officer related with self-complacency, that he had lately declined a party, to which he had been invited by a lady, without any apology, as it appeared to him sinful to pretend indisposition or an engagement. The company praised this love of truth, and were of opinion that this fashion and habit must become universal in society, if it



was ever to be delivered from empty affectation, hypocrisy, and continual petty falsehood. The mother also hesitatingly joined in these assertions, though she feared such a line of conduct might be difficult to pursue, without entirely dissolving the delicate ties of society ; but that on this very account the virtue of the individual, who has the courage to overlook these considerations, was the more praiseworthy. "There is nothing," she continued, "which I have sought so much to awaken and keep alive in my children, as the sacred instinct of truth ; I have been on my guard to prevent them from ever permitting themselves the smallest untruth, even in jest. I have myself always endeavoured to answer all their questions with truth, to remove out of their course of instruction every thing which could not be made clear and plain ; but above all I avoided those absurd legends and lying stories, which cherish fear and superstition, and tend certainly, more than any thing else, to estrange the minds of children from truth."

The Baron enlarged upon these positions, and all the rest concurred, except the Count,

who expressed his opinion, that it might be one of the most difficult of answers to say, what truth, truth properly so called, was. "Men," said he, "have been seeking it in all directions for thousands of years, and in this, as in almost all things, good will, the intention of being veracious, must but too often supply the place of the thing itself. If I would constantly tell the truth to children or imbecile persons in answer to all questions, I run in danger of being unable to speak truth any longer; for the last answer at least rests upon a mystery which I am as little at liberty to deny, as I am able to explain it. And to this invisible region we are impelled at a very early age by imagination and feeling, and the teacher, who would keep youthful impatience aloof from it, is only obliged to have recourse to a different lie, which perhaps, in its false philosophy, is as bad as that of superstition. So likewise it appears to me injudicious to avoid cultivating the imagination of children, even in that singular power, which seeks horror, and devises blind and wild terrors. This impulse is in us, it stirs itself early; and if

one aims at keeping it under, if one strives to destroy it, which is impossible, it grows on darkling and deepening, and gains in strength, what it loses in shape. I have known women, who in an over-enlightened education had been kept even from the most innocent fairy tale, and who, in their riper years, could not summon courage to go even through the next room of an evening, so tyrannized were they by a nameless, absolutely childish panic, so that they impotently trembled at every sound and every shadow. If, on the contrary, that element in the imagination of children, which delights in the prodigious and fearful, is reduced to shape, if it is softened in legends and stories, then this world of shadows blends even with humour and drollery, and itself, the most intricate labyrinth of our minds, may become a magic mirror of truth. By means of this phantasmagoria, we may catch glimpses of far distant and yet friendly spirits, which but very seldom pass across us in visible approximation."

"That you are such a friend to superstition,"

answered the Baroness, "is what I now learn for the first time."

Dorothea seemed not to lose a word of this singular conversation; she looked at Kunigunde, whom this description of an irrational alarm, to which she was often subject even in the day time, literally fitted; the other sisters too were at times childish enough, and were afraid of every walk in the evening. Kunigunde was sensitive; she thought the stranger was acquainted with her weakness, and meant only to describe her. The mother could hardly conceal her embarrassment.

"I cannot always approach society," proceeded Brandenstein, "with the naked truth, for this is what it does not require or expect from me. I may not throw into it the virtues of solitude, if I would not destroy the charm by which it is so attractive to the man of cultivated mind. One finds every where bad society, which I certainly do not mean to praise; but when polished life, the delicate links of the educated world, the graceful relation of the sexes, the forms contrived by wit and good

breeding, have been so often compared in contempt to the laws and conditions of an ingenious game of cards, I have thought the simile not unappropriate, but the contempt singular, and have been at a loss to conceive that any one should have been blind to the variety of life and its necessary forms. A man should only have lived for a time with rustics, who so often want to pass off their rude bluntness for manly virtue, who violate all decencies, who acknowledge no mystery, no delicate relation, but nick-name every thing at all refined, affectation and hypocrisy ; a man should have been exposed for weeks together to this rude pawing and grasping, and the oppressive weariness it occasions, to value once more the dignity of a polished intellectual intercourse. In that indeed a bare yea and nay will not always pass ; and to wish to overthrow, by what we call truth, the conventional forms, by which alone this phenomenon admits of being exhibited, is just as unreasonable as if I should call the laws which regulate a game of chess a lie, move with

my pawns into my antagonist's last row, and declare my game won."

"You are a tolerable sophist," said the Baron. "All that is still wanting is an encomium on the calumny and slander, the envy and intrigue, of great societies; it would then only remain to throw contempt upon the quiet virtue, the beautiful civic plainness, the child-like innocence and noble simplicity of the unfashionable world."

"You cannot possibly have so misunderstood me," said the Count; "I only mean that one ought not to confound the conditions which are requisite to every game and every work of art (and good and polite society ought certainly to partake of the nature of both) with untruths; for even in dancing there is no truth, if the straight-forward bustling step of business is to be called by that name, and even the promenade might from this point of view be exposed to no inconsiderable conscientious scruples."

"Worse and worse!" cried the Baron: "happily, my ingenious Count, you are saying all

this in company, on which you cannot produce a pernicious impression."

"You have drawn me in for once," replied Brandenstein, "and so you may hear my whole confession of faith. I believe there never was a man (and there never will come one), who did not at some time or other in his life consciously lie, whether it were a forced shift or weakness, fear, selfishness, or vanity, or any of the other stains of our nature; perhaps even merely to follow the spirit of falsehood which but too temptingly allures us. And we need only take a look at the sublime apostles, to learn, that they had not always strength sufficient to be faithful to their model, the eternal divine truth. Many instances of this sort I should be inclined to call innocent lies, which, for the very reason that they are so decided, a man of a better nature can soon avoid. But how stands the case then with that varnished self-love, that parading egoism, that finished hypocrisy, which form the entire life of many men into one single lie? I have known some, at least, who were sunk so deep in the spirit of lying, that there no

longer existed for them such a thing as truth. And these men passed for virtuous, they esteemed themselves chosen vessels, they could even keep up their part of hypocrisy on their death-bed."

"Such a case is impossible!" exclaimed the Baron, and all agreed with him; only Alfred expressed his opinion, that a depravity of this sort might exist, whereupon Dorothea stared at him with surprize. ("You are speaking, in fact," continued the Baron, "of a former world; during your absence every thing has changed with us so, that if you are only now beginning to renew your acquaintance with our country, you will scarcely find a trace of its former state. The old irreligion, that empty scepticism which called itself philosophy, is, heaven be thanked, pretty well gone by; the germs of a genuine religious temper are unfolding themselves from day to day in greater beauty, one is no longer ashamed of being a Christian, of believing in the Lord, and elevating one's self to him in fervent prayer. The churches are once more filled, the higher classes do not disdain any



longer the communion of their fellow-Christian, books of devotion have supplanted frivolous reading on the tables of our wives and daughters; purified souls, instead of entertaining themselves with theatrical gossip, converse upon the bible, animate each other to penitence and devotion, communicate the experience of their hearts, mutually strengthen one another, and the spirit of the Lord speaks more and more distinctly in these exalted affections. All this, my sceptical friend, you will at least be forced to allow its value and its weight, for here is truth and love, here no mistake is possible."

He had said all this with great unction. The Count was silent a moment, before he said: "Our table-talk has assumed so serious a turn and so grave an import, that it would certainly be more proper to break off, and either to reserve these explanations for a calmer hour, or wholly drop them, since on these important subjects one is most easily misunderstood."

"Because you now feel yourself completely defeated," said the Baron, "you wish at all events to provide yourself with a safe retreat.

I should have thought it now became your duty, openly to confess, that you have nothing to say on this point, unless you would undisguisedly avow, that the almost forgotten scepticism of former times is dearer to you than our holy religion."

"O speak!" cried Dorothea, forgetting herself.

"You see how pressingly you are called upon," said the mother, darting a long and threatening look at Dorothea. Alfred too requested the Count to explain how far he coincided with the opinions of the age on this point.

"As I cannot entirely avoid it," said he, "I will briefly hint what I have been able to observe; for as I have been now a year again in Germany, every thing is not so strange to me as you suppose, though it is but a short time back that I came to revisit my birthplace here. I only wish I could divest you all of the prejudice with which, I observe, you consider me, as a profane infidel. No, that is really not my character; but I must reserve to myself the

incontestable right of being a Christian after my own manner. That there are now, as at all times, really pious and enlightened spirits, and that these deserve our respect, who would doubt? The need of faith has again proclaimed itself, the spirit has knocked at almost every heart, and admonitions have been heard, of various kinds, and from all quarters. A clear fresh stream has once more poured from the eternal hills along the thirsty plain, and the things and beings overtaken by it follow the force of its waves; all feel irresistibly hurried along, and great and small, strong and weak, are forced down with its current. Genuine as is the enthusiasm which this has occasioned, yet has it happened here, as in all historical events, that this phenomenon likewise has been clouded by the multitude, by vanity and human weakness, and as it was once the fashion to play the freethinker and the *esprit fort*, though many were weak and superstitious, so it has now become the custom to seem religious, though many are frivolous and lukewarm enough at heart."

“ *Desinit in atrum piscem,*” said the Baron warmly, “ your beginning promised something better.”

“ How many persons,” proceeded Brandenstein calmly, “ have fallen in my way, who almost at the first bow gave me to understand that they were extraordinary Christians. Others, at every third word, and upon the most indifferent subjects, make mention of the Saviour; upon every occasion, however trifling, they fall a praying, and tell us of it; nay, I have read romances, in which the author said in his preface, that he never wrote without praying first, and that every thing good contained in his book was immediate inspiration; the shortest way of rebutting all criticism, and setting the romance close by the side of revealed Writ. In company people take every opportunity to talk of repentance, penance, devotion and redemption, and profane, according to my feeling, what is sacred, forgetting that it has a resemblance to love, the feelings and confessions of which the true lover will be unwilling to expose to a stranger’s ear.”

“ But what harm does it,” said the Baron, “ if pious spirits do perhaps speak even too often of the object of their love ?”

“ It cannot be love,” replied Brandenstein, “ it is vanity, arrogance, that affects to be better than other men. Just like that of the period of sentimentalism or philosophism, it is a sickly craving, that seeks nourishment every where, that flatters and humours itself into deeper and deeper disease, looks intolerantly and contemptuously on our fellow men, who are often better and more pious, because they will not precisely chime in with the given tone.”

“ You are painting the excess,” faltered the Baroness in a kind of uneasiness.

“ Nothing else, honoured madam,” answered the Count ; “ only that it has frequently fallen under my notice. I have seen too books of edification, that seem to be very much in fashion, old and new, which really can only serve completely to distract men of moderate intellects, who are already infected with this vanity, in which the Creator, the essence of love, is represented like a capricious old hu-

mourist, that for want of employment has taken a fancy to weave the most complicated destinies, and again, in a subtle and extraordinary manner, to extricate this or that individual out of their misery, though many at the same time are lost. Others convert religion into magic and enchantment, or harden the hearts of wives so that they feel themselves infinitely exalted above their husbands, and keep them, if they do not quite adopt their own devotional twattle, in a state of purgatory, and in the feeling, how low they have themselves descended, to be the saintly wives of such ordinary sinners. I knew a poor girl of moderate capacity, who esteemed herself happy in becoming the wife of a young man in thriving circumstances, but who, by the end of half a year, became likewise a saint, and now juggles herself into the belief, that her christian virtue consists in enduring her husband ; she seems to herself super-human if she does not quite despise him, but however she says this every day to herself and her religious playmates, who confirm her in this exercise of piety. Is not this now sin?"

“Ay surely!” suddenly sighed Kunigunde’s husband; and the mother, who saw the prop of her family visibly breaking down, repented having begun this conversation, and was angry with her worthy friend the Baron, for having stirred it into a blaze.

Brandenstein however, who was now at last in full career, was likewise unable to rest in his spiritual ardour, till he had brought his whole philippic to bear. “How elevating a spectacle is it,” he proceeded more loudly, “to see pious men, in order to devote themselves entirely to things sacred, turn their backs on the world and all its treasures, to live in still seclusion to one great feeling only! I will not censure particular fraternities, when in a like spirit they immure themselves, and will have no concern with art and history, philosophy and the world. But when these narrow-minded devotees, who remain in the world, who have enjoyed the same education with the rest of mankind, and profess themselves people of cultivated minds, call out to us over and over again, that there is only One Thing Needful,

that painting, music and poetry are not only superfluous, but even sinful, and that prayer, the inward light and penitence, is all that ought to interest the heart of man,—I should be inclined to ask these persons, of what narrow feeling that which they call their religion is composed, that it cannot and ought not to admit of love, truth, reason and the lovely forms of the imagination? Is it then no longer true, that to the pure all things are pure? The man to whom God no longer appears in nature and history, is to be considered as dead; that man is lost, who no longer sees his lofty presence in the strength of reason. He too is pious on whom a picture flashes rapturous delight, and who, while he reads Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, feels blest and in paradise. For even mirth, humour and wit are of divine original, and we grow the purer and the more refined, the more we learn to perceive the ray of divinity in these delicate sports of the fancy."

"It is true indeed," said the Baron, who had observed the Baroness's obvious dissatisfaction,



“ we cannot to-day bring this interesting conversation to an end.”

“ Impossible,” answered the Count, who seemed himself surprized at his own warmth, “ else I should be glad to be informed why these pious spirits do not submit with more humility to the church? Why they require, that all men should see things in their way? How it happens that no doubts cross them too, and enable them to conceive, that they may themselves be in an error? Whether it is not more christian to pray, rather according to the gospel with closed doors, than pharisaically to proclaim their much praying to the world? I might also observe, that this spiritual vertigo combines itself strikingly enough with a political one, and that this morbid mood, which is spreading over all Germany, has rendered it possible for an excessively confused and feeble book to gain the applause of a crowd, which now at last evinces, how little it ever comprehended our great poet, at the time when it was shouting his praises. It may be considered as an outrage to this great man, if we would not rather

view it as ludicrous, that he should be so schooled and catechized, that his works should be charged with immorality, and deficiency in idealism, because he never condescended to the miserable wants of this spokesman. That all this has been possible, has shown me how little true intellectual culture has taken root among us, and how easy it is therefore for giddy heads to perplex with half-notions the bawling crowd."

"You mean Göthe," said the Baron, "and what are called the spurious 'Wander-jahre.' Well, we have now rambled sufficiently wide of our original argument."

A pause ensued, all seemed out of tune, Dorothea was deeply agitated. As a servant was bringing in a dish of roast meat, the Baroness cried, "Oh! how could I forget the poor sick widow? John, carry this dish immediately to the unfortunate woman, with my hearty wishes. She is suffering incredibly, as I have been told to-day; she is besides poor, and her children are able to give her but little assistance." "Ay, poverty, sickness!" sighed the

Baron. "Oh heaven, what would become of this gloomy earth, if there were not still some tender, noble spirits, who endeavour to mitigate its enormous wretchedness!"

"The poor woman," added Kunigunde, "is supposed not to have been at all happy with her deceased husband, he was harsh and rough, and often treated her with insolence." She darted at the same time at her husband, who sat at the other end of the table, a singular look, that was pregnant with meaning. The young man, roused by the conversation, had the unexampled boldness to reply, that it was often wives' own fault, if they were not happy in matrimony. The Count, to prevent more specific explanations, observed that, as the woman's complaint was not exactly known, it might perhaps do her harm, to eat meat without proper precaution. But the Baron, who anticipated a new hostile attack, spoke with pathos of the great beneficence of the Baroness, how she was a mother to the poor, and could not conceive, how there could be men so cal-

lous as to be unaffected by the misery of their fellow-creatures.

Now came John back with the roast meat, and brought word, that the widow returned her most dutiful thanks; but that she had been forbidden meat for the present in her fever by the physician, and that beside she had received from the chateau, for three weeks past, every thing she stood in need of, for which she could not sufficiently express her gratitude. “A physician?” said the Baroness, “she has received already? and how?”—“Oh, your ladyship,” said the old servant confused, and in agitation, “Miss Dorothea has for a long time past sent her every thing, she got the doctor for her too, and visits the sick woman herself every morning and evening.” “So!” said the Baroness with a lengthened quivering tone, and a piercing look fell on her daughter, who in her confusion could make no reply; “And why, my child, is this exercise of beneficence, this virtue, which is so new to me in you, kept so secret? Why not allow your mother a share

in the merit, now that at last your heart inclines to such christian offices of love? My advice would make the act of charity a genuine one. But as it is, it looks as if waywardness, rather than compassion, guided your actions."

"Dear mother," begged Dorothea, "spare me."

"It is to be lamented," proceeded the mother, "when even that which in itself is virtue, by the mode in which it is exercised, transforms itself into a subject of censure. Above all I see pride and presumption in this mode of acting, in your undertaking to be wise and managing without me, when you cannot know whether by this means you are not causing more harm than good."

"It is too much!" cried Dorothea, weeping aloud; she rose hastily, and with covered face left the room.

All stared, but the Count seemed most surprised; he said with emotion in his voice: "Is not the censure that has been passed on the young lady really too much? She probably

meant well; nor does it appear to me blameable, that she performs her charitable acts in secret, that she is perhaps a little too reserved about them, in order not to expose herself to the appearance of ostentation."

"Of a surety, your ladyship," said the grey-headed servant, "my young lady is an angel, so all the people in the village think her; all that she can save out of her pocket-money, whatever she can spare of her clothes, she lays out upon the poor, but the most beautiful thing of all is the gracious quiet way she has, and how she calms the people, and comforts the sick, and admonishes the children to be obedient to their parents, who are often cross;—indeed we are to keep it a secret, for she gave us strict orders about that, and we have done so for years, but sooner or later a man will be caught tripping. Beg your ladyship's pardon."

This discourse passed as the company were rising: the Baroness was in a tremor. The Baron, with solemn face and air, kissed the mother's hand, and endeavoured to set matters

right; the Count took his leave with few words, and Alfred accompanied him; the rest of the party went into the garden-parlour.

“It brings no good,” said the mother, “when wicked men cross our thresholds.”

“No blessing of heaven follows them,” added the Baron.

“What an afternoon!” cried the Baroness, “it will be long ere I forget it! Such men are all that is wanting in our neighbourhood, to plunge my poor rebellious child into total ruin. But you too, my son, took more interest in that godless man, than I or your pious Kunigunde could wish.”

“I think though,” said Kunigunde’s husband, “that he said many very sensible things; I am of opinion myself, that this piety is carried too far, and that there may be many women who think too much of themselves.”

Upon this the Baron gave him a long reproving look, which the poor man could not stand; and when Kunigunde now began to weep aloud, and the mother likewise weeping folded her in her arms to comfort her, he was

so much moved, that he could no longer restrain his repentant tears: he also threw himself on his wife's bosom, sobbing, and begging forgiveness. "Be all composed," said the Baron in a solemnly consolatory tone, as he raised his eyes to heaven: "the Lord will set every thing right, for this evening, as you have told me, that obdurate and yet dear heart pledges itself to me; through my weak co-operation the Spirit will then enlighten her, and we shall all be one heart and one love."

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Dorothea had shut herself up in her chamber in tears. So distracted, so dissatisfied with herself and the world, so utterly lost and wretched, she had never yet felt herself before. She was deeply ashamed that the simple method of relieving the poor, which seemed to her the most natural, had been suddenly divulged by the simplicity of the servant; but still she thought it too hard, to be treated as she had been for it by her own mother, before all the company, and what pained her more



than all was, that it was done in the presence of the man, whom she could not but respect, who had won her confidence, and whose esteem she likewise desired to obtain.

It had grown dark without her perceiving it, when a servant tapped at her door, and requested her to come down to her mother and the company. "Mother!" said she to herself, "Mother! what a sweet word! Why have I never known one?"

She went down, the family were assembled in the parlour; the young officer was also present. As Dorothea entered, it occurred to her for the first time, why she had been summoned. A shivering fit came over her. All saluted her as the Baron's betrothed, the mother said kindly, she would now forgive her that day's behaviour; the sisters wished the dejected girl joy, and the Baron covered her trembling hand with tender kisses. "Be calm, be happy," said he in a soft tone; "henceforth, my love, you will quite belong to us, and this man shall never more enter our house; you were certainly right, and it was heaven that spoke in you, that such a

wretch ought not to move where we set our steps."

"A wretch?" cried Dorothea, and tore her hand so violently away, that the Baron staggered back. "You are an audacious man, to dare so to vilify such a person."

"Heaven!" shrieked the mother, "she has lost her senses! An evil spirit speaks out of her."

Dorothea bethought herself again; she saw the astonishment of those around her, and endeavoured to collect herself. "I am so shaken," she began, "I feel myself so agitated, perhaps indisposition—I will just cool myself a moment in the open air."

"In this weather?" said the mother, "in this storm and rain, so without a handkerchief, in your thin dress?"

"I must, I must!" she exclaimed, and without listening to remonstrances, she had already opened the parlour door, and was standing in the dark cold garden. As the rain beat against her, she turned into the walk which was covered by closely interwoven boughs, and walked hastily

up and down. "To him, that loathsome being," said she to herself, "united for ever? So deeply, so deeply degraded? And for whom? For those, who will never thank me for it, who will afterwards make it appear as if it was the greatest of benefits that had been conferred on myself? Save my soul? That here is lost, utterly ruined!"

A dark shadow came up to her, and by the lisping soft voice she immediately recognized the Baron. "My sweet girl," he began, "your dear mother, and all of us, are expecting you indoors with anxious apprehension; my heart is overflowing with tenderness, for I already consider you as my wife, and the mother of my pious children."

"Heaven!" she exclaimed, "that I never thought of, that my misery may extend so far, as to see hypocrites and selfish wretches spring out of my blood. But though I had not that calamity to fear, still I could never be yours."

"How?" cried the Baron, "and the solemn promise, which you this morning pronounced to your mother?"

“Though I had made it to an angel of heaven,” said Dorothea, “still I cannot keep it! Nay, even had the wedding taken place, we must have been parted again!”

“Strange, young lady! Do you reflect on the consequences?”

“What can they be? Any thing may be endured in comparison with that abyss of misery which awaits me.”

“Are you aware too that your mother has a right to require it? Are you aware, that she is under engagements to me, which till now I bore and kept secret with the patience of love, in the hope of belonging to your family? Ask yourself, whether under these circumstances you are not bound, as a good daughter, to discharge your mother’s engagements?”

“No!” cried she in the greatest excitement, “rather pine with her, work for her, nay, die for her.”

“There are still methods,” said the Baron half laughing, “to bend such stubbornness; the rights of parents are great, and you are evidently at present not quite in possession of

your senses; a little of intreaty, a little of force, will subdue in time this childish wilfulness."

He had seized her arm with violence, and endeavoured to pull her towards the house; but the strong girl tore herself quickly away, and flew down the walk, the Baron after her. She however, who was more nimble and better acquainted with the mazes of the garden, was soon a great way ahead; she was now at the open verge of the grounds; this she also stepped over, and ran across the fallow field, like a hunted deer, while alternately the rain drenched her, and the storm chilled her delicate limbs.

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Madame von Halden was sitting comfortably in her little parlour, while the storm shook the trees out of doors, and the rain pattered against the windows. Her heart was perfectly at ease; for she had sold her estate at an unexpectedly high price, all was concluded, and Count Brandenstein with counsellor Alfred had that very evening brought every thing into due form.

The two gentlemen were upstairs asleep, for it was near midnight, and she was herself on the point of retiring to her chamber, when she was alarmed by a violent loud knocking at the house door, and a plaintive suppliant voice. She rang the bell, a servant was sent to open the door, and with her clothes dripping, trembling and pale as death, Dorothea rushed in, threw herself immediately with violence upon her bosom, and cried with a hoarse voice, "Save me, save me!"

"For God's sake!" said her friend in extreme terror, "is it you, my dear girl? And so, in this state? I cannot trust my eyes." Notwithstanding her fright however, she immediately with the most friendly alertness fetched linen and clothes, helped the chilled girl to change her dress, cheered her laughingly and kindly, and then forced her to take some mulled wine which she had got ready with the utmost haste, to guard against the bad effects of the chill. She at the same time embraced her so cordially, drying the tears from her eyes, and kissing her cheeks which began

now to recover their colour, that Dorothea felt herself almost as happy as in the arms of a mother. After many cheering and playful words, Madame von Halden said at last, "Now tell me briefly, how you came to this mad resolution, and then go to bed and sleep all off."

"You must protect me," said Dorothea, "you must not refuse me shelter, otherwise I must run in despair into the wide world, or madness will drive me into a mill-pool."

"Calm yourself, child," said her friend soothingly; "you must of course return home. But tell me: what has befallen you all of a sudden?"

"Only do not laugh," cried Dorothea, "keep serious, my good dear friend, for I am in despair. This morning I let myself be persuaded, from weakness, from emotion, they had celebrated my birthday so unexpectedly, to promise to betroth myself this evening to Baron von Wallen. This was now to take place, and that is why I have run away, because I abhor him, because I cannot live any longer at home with my sisters and my mother."

"I am well aware," replied her friend, "that

you cannot love the Baron, that injustice was often done you in the family ; but this expression of horror in you, as you seemed so used to every thing, is still incomprehensible to me."

"I do not yet understand it myself," answered Dorothea ; "I do not know how I am to relate it to you. That I was not happy, you must of course have seen, though I never said a word to you on the subject. Alas, the origin of that dates itself from my beloved father's death. You know I was scarcely thirteen years old when he died. O heaven, what a man ! I could not at that time estimate his value, but the older I grew, the more he bloomed in my remembrance as the bright object of my love. That benign gentle spirit, that cheerfulness, humanity, quiet piety, that delight in nature and art, that active, admirable intellect—alas ! and he was not happy either ! I saw, I observed it well, when I came to distinguish a little, he was not happy in his marriage ; he and my mother were too unlike one another, they were often at variance with each other. He was then at times deeply dejected, infinite sorrow



would speak out of his fine dark eyes, as he bent them silently to the ground. And now on a sudden he was gone! He must have learnt and felt on the other side the grave how my heart's love followed him. O my friend, there are moments of pain, when nothing but the cold dull stupor into which our whole being sinks, rescues us from frenzy and madness. So I grew up in pain and regret, which no one shared, no one understood. And what an alteration took place in the life of our family! Instead of the cheerful conversations, instead of the lively parties, a serious solemn parade. My younger sisters were educated in a spirit quite opposite to that which my father had wished. Prayers, books of devotion, religious conversation, filled up the intervals of the day; and my heart grew more and more vacant; I could not sympathize in their devotion, could not even believe in its existence. My books, which were my father's presents too, I no longer ventured to shew; all was worldly and offensive. I was frightened at the constructions put on passages, which were my greatest

favorites, which I knew by heart. Even Göthe's heavenly nature, his noble elevation, was seductive sensuality ; and a refined prudery, which to me was in the highest degree disgusting, was to assume the name of virtue. My sisters, as they came to the age of reflexion, considered me as a degenerate creature, unsusceptible of any thing good ; it was what they heard every hour, they could not help believing it. Between them and my mother there sprang a relation, which kept me at an equal distance from both parties, but for which I could not envy them ; an overstrained love, a delicate tenderness, a soothing and fondling which often cut me to the heart ; nay my mother went so far as to idolize her younger daughters, to adore them, and to tell them she did so. My sisters treated my mother nearly in the way that one would hold intercourse with a departed saint, if she were to return to us ; but this was what I could not carry on for above a day ; I was then under the necessity of seeking a more cheerful intimacy with her, or avoiding her altogether. I still well remembered how often my father

had said, that in early youth children must learn to obey blindly, in order that, when grown up, they may be capable of freedom. This freedom of the mind and heart, which makes man an independent being, which is the indispensable condition of love, of a free devotion, found however no room in this close union, nay, whenever it attempted to shew itself, it was treated as the worst of sins. Not the least weakness, not the slightest prejudice of my mother was to be touched ; even in trifles, on the subject of an indifferent book, the character of a man, nay even on the colour of a ribbon, no one was to entertain a different opinion from her. If but a walk was proposed only to a neighbour's house, nay in the garden, she forbade it, unless she could or chose to join in it, not directly, but she would say ; 'Go, if you can be without me ; I indeed cannot live without you, but if you can, I will not disturb you ; I am accustomed indeed to make every sacrifice to you.' Of course the thing was not done, and my sisters gave their vexation the air of devotion, and I, who did not belong to the compact,

was forced to pay for their humours. My courage failed me. I endured to be taken to task even by my youngest sister. O my friend! when I observed all this, which appeared to me unnatural and wrong, I would then go into the most solitary corner of the garden, and give my hot tears their course; for I seemed to myself vile and reprobate to confess all this to myself, and to be unable to stifle my sense of truth, which had been awakened and formed by my father. I was often so inexpressibly miserable that I prayed for death. There would come times too, when, as I could not help seeing how every body that came to our house paid respect and homage to my sisters, and avoided me, I appeared to myself vile and despicable. But when I struggled to be like the others, all my strength failed me, and my arms dropped unnerved by my side.—But did you not hear a noise in the next room?”

“No, my sweet girl,” said Madame von Halden: “every body is asleep, it cannot be any thing more than a cat.”

“Kunigunde married,” proceeded Dorothea;

“the men who paid their addresses to me, only teased me by their coxcombry, or shocked me by their ill breeding. I could not conceive that any one could love me, without my most fervently loving him, and on that account their affected hyperbolical phrases appeared to me so insipid, and I could not possibly believe in their passion. All however was still tolerable, till Baron Wallen came to our house; he soon gained possession of my mother’s affections, and the slavery now grew quite insupportable. Now began a parade to be made on a great scale with the love which my sisters bore each other and my mother; it was the talk of the whole province; when strangers came, it was like a drama in which all the virtues were displayed. O forgive me! you and the lonely night will not carry my words farther; you have yourself indeed seen their way, and heaven must alter my feelings, or pardon them. But what was truly alarming was, that in this smooth Baron there moves a very satyr under the priestly robe. He took a liking to Clara, to Clementine too; but the girls, great as was the reverence which

they could not help feeling for him, were still terrified at the thought of being forced to adore him as a husband. They were however soon released ; for the lot, for which they felt themselves too good, was imperceptibly and artfully shifted upon me. I now heard perpetually how noble, nay how necessary it was, to sacrifice one's self, how wretched a thing the mere passion of love appeared, how much a prudent marriage surpassed all other happiness on earth. Believe me, I should have given way, my life had lost all its bloom, I should have fallen a victim, and become utterly wretched, if \_\_\_\_\_”

Dorothea hesitated. “ Well, my child ? ” asked her friend on the stretch.

“ If it had not been, that to-day,” she proceeded in her melodious tone, “ on this very day, the day on which I was born, and on which I have returned to life again, a man appeared, who was an abomination to our family, with whom, from the descriptions I had heard, I was myself violently angry, a man, who has made a total revolution in my heart, indeed has re-

generated it, and whose mere presence, even if he had not spoken, would have rendered it impossible for me to marry the Baron, or indeed any man whatever."

"Wonderful!" cried Madame von Halden.

"Call it so," said the maiden: "indeed it is so, O, and yet again so natural, so necessary! In him, in his mild look, which inspires confidence (believe me I had really quite forgotten there were such things as eyes) in his intelligent discourse, in every one of his gestures, there appeared to me once more that truth which had now become a fable to me, my youthful days, the blessed time of my father. I never could conceive that which men call love; in the Poets indeed I may have caught a glimpse of it, but I always believed that this heavenly feeling was not made for a poor outcast like me; but now I know, it must be that which I experience towards this excellent man, for I could not imagine that such a being really moved upon the earth."

"Poor girl!" said her friend; "he is a ruined man, without property, and besides who

knows whether he may feel the same sentiments for you, for he is no longer young. Now go to bed, to-morrow morning early we will consult rationally on the means of soothing the Baroness, and making the Baron leave you in peace."

"I never will return!" cried Dorothea with renewed vehemence. "I would rather be a servant-maid in a distant land."

A noise was now heard more distinctly in the adjoining room, the ladies started, the door opened, a ray of light gleamed through and Count Brandenstein presented himself to them.

"O my God!" cried Dorothea, "the Count himself!"

"I had not gone to bed," answered he; "but was still busy, when this unexpected visit—"

"O you sly creature!" cried Madame von Halden; "and so you have heard of course every thing that my friend has been telling?"

"I cannot deny it," said the Count; "the wainscot and door are so thin, that not a word escaped me. (Dorothea trembled violently.) And so, my lovely, generous, and inexpressibly



dear young lady, you would not disdain me, if I could lay a fortune at your feet?"

"O how you confound me!" said she; "am I to say still more?"

"Take this letter," proceeded the Count; "these few lines will ensure you perfect security at home."

He cast a thrilling glance at Dorothea and lingeringly withdrew. She was so agitated and shattered, that her slumbers were broken and afforded her but little refreshment.

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A few friends were assembled at Baron Wilden's house for a little ball. Alfred and the officer were likewise present, and the Baron's young sister, an amiable girl, seemed extremely entertained. Miss Erhard too was in high spirits, and Michael, who was a spectator, could hardly conceive how she could move so nimbly in the Scotch reel. The dance was now over, and the corpulent host tumbled down exhausted upon a sofa. "If it does not fairly make one young again," he cried; "though

it is hard work too. The deuce, my dear Miss Erhard, what bounds you can take! I should never have expected along with your piety so much elasticity. This is as I like it, when a way can be found to reconcile the heavenly with the earthly, for really the heart is cramped to death with that humility and meekness, unless it can now and then make a good start in mirth and pleasure. You seem to me quite a new creature, Miss Erhard, here in my house, I should not at all have known you again if I had not been sure that it was you."

The lively virgin seated herself by him and both looked on at the dancers. Alfred was paying great attention to Sophia, the Baron's sister, a circumstance which the Baron remarked not without satisfaction. The sideboards were abundantly supplied with refreshments, which were handed round by servants in rich liveries on silver plate. "Is it not true?" said the Baron, who perceived the complacent looks of his neighbour, with a leer: "We do not lead here such a life as in the chateau yonder, where they sit for the most

part all together, like Adam and Eve before the fall? High-flown phrases, apocalyptic sighs, and a marvellous tincture of ambrosial melancholy. Virtue and devotion the stuff, pious sentiment for a lining, and the whole turned up with contrition and penitence. No, a man must sin a bit, to be able to become a convert; is it not so, my highly esteemed young lady? Your legs do not ache sure? You make such a twitching with your mouth."

"No," said she, "I was only trying to check a laugh at your strange expressions, for in fact you are an abominable sinner. I hope however that you will still repent."

"Time brings counsel," said the Baron: "do you see, I have managed my matters prudently, I have committed a multitude of sins before hand in my youth, in order that, in my old age, I might have a pretty stock to repent of, and not be obliged, like many a devotee, to suck transgressions out of my fingers' ends, and make scruples of conscience for nothing and against nothing. O of that I have things

to tell you some of these afternoons, that shall make you open both your eyes."

"But this sort of talk is sin again," answered the virgin.

"Come," cried the Baron, "you must not examine my virtue through the microscope, else we shall never have done with each other; for with me every thing tends rather to the gross; my merits are as little refined as my vices. But see, how among all my guests Mr. von Böhmer is standing so solitary by the stove, and musing in the midst of the music! Lieutenant, pray come and take a dance with one of these ladies."

"I never dance," said the young officer, coming up to them: "nor should I have come, had I not been invited by Miss Erhard; and it could never have occurred to me, that she had in view a dinning ball."

"Is it not said, that to the pure all things are pure?" asked the lady with great unction.

Alfred, who had come up, answered; "Certainly, that is the right view of the matter, and it would be droll enough, if M. von Wilden

were to be converted by the lady, and she by our lively Baron. But you Ferdinand (addressing himself to the officer,) wear not a single holiday look on your dusky countenance."

"I am going away," he answered, "to the Baroness, will you accompany me?"

"No, my friend" answered the other, "nor do I purpose ever troubling that circle again; for that ostentatious hypocrisy has of late become sufficiently clear to me. How thankful am I to the worthy man, who shook the bandage from my eyes!"

"You mean Count Brandenstein?" said his friend: "You take then the part of the wicked against the pious, of sin against virtue?"

"Let us drop this language now," replied Alfred, "I feel myself, since I became acquainted with that person, more my own man."

"Do you know then," interrupted the Baron, "any thing of the story? They say the savage, the American, is come, a spotted, copper-coloured man, with hair like scales or prickles. People say too, this wild animal would marry that froward girl Dorothea.

“Nothing is known for certain,” said Alfred. “The American will at all events be a man like all others, and consequently she will be more happy with him, than with Baron Wallen.”

“Whom you are incapable of appreciating,” cried the officer, as with a slight bow he withdrew.

“You think then,” continued the Baron, “a well-bred girl might live happily with such a sea-monster? But indeed in life a great many sorts of happiness must be consumed, that every one may get something to suit him; and they tell me, the pretty Dorothea is so ungodly, that perhaps the most ungodly cannibal is not too bad for her.”

“You are misinformed,” answered Alfred, and was on the point of beginning a story, when the good-natured Sophia came tripping up, to remind him that he had engaged her for the next quadrille. The Baron in the mean while drank, and promised Miss Erhard to dance the next Polish Waltz, or at all events the merry “Turn Out” with her.

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When Dorothea was missed that night, and the Baron had communicated the history of his unfortunate courtship, the whole house was thrown into the greatest confusion. Servants were sent out with lights, but all came back in the stormy night without intelligence. The mother was very uneasy, and seemed to reproach herself with having urged a violent temper, such as she knew her eldest daughter's to be, too far. She did not go to rest, but wandered about in the house, and her two younger daughters endeavoured to comfort her. In the morning appeared a messenger from Madame von Halden, and delivered a note to the Baroness; shortly after a coach drew up, from which Dorothea alighted, whom her mother received with a forced composure. But little was said, not a word of reproach however was heard, and the daughter could as little produce an apology.

The Baron, who had observed every thing with anxiety and confusion, said at last, when he saw himself alone with the Baroness; "This letter has certainly done wonders! Of all that

you proposed to yourself with regard to this perverse girl, not a particle has been executed, you are, on the contrary, kinder to her than ever. May I not be allowed to know, from whom it comes, and what it contains?"

The Baroness reddened. "It comes from that Brandenstein," said she with a tremulous voice: "but the conclusion contains the grossest calumny."

The Baron read: "In the event of your giving, as I firmly hope, a kind reception to your noble, sorrowing daughter, teasing her under no pretext whatever, and abandoning all thoughts of marrying her to Baron Wallen, I promise you the sum which the Baron has to demand of you, and a considerable loan besides, both without interest, for an indefinite time. Do not force me into hostilities, or several things may take wind which do not suit that model of virtue, which the world admires in you. I may certainly subscribe myself

Your friend,

G. BRANDENSTEIN.



“This note intimates,” said the Baron with a sneer; “that our heroic Count has large sums at his disposal, and that his American friend or ward, to whom he plays the part of tutor or steward, is probably a sufficient simpleton; just according to my idea of the affair from the beginning. The generous man, as circumstances require, will dip his hand deep into the purse of his outlandish prodigy, and thus on closer inspection does the gilding disappear from every puffed out Cato, and change into copper.”

The affair however assumed a different aspect, when the next day a letter came from Brandenstein, in which he applied for Dorothea’s hand on behalf of his wealthy American. He had convinced himself, so he wrote, that his friend, with whom he was intimately acquainted, could be happy with no other being.

Dorothea, who was quite lost in her thoughts and feelings, was terrified at this proposal; she declined it with vehemence, and it filled her heart with despair, that the Count, who had seen her whole soul, could make this proposition. “No feeling then,” she sighed in secret, “not

the slightest, for me, that think and dream only of him.”

Upon the mother's refusal, followed a still kinder letter of the Count ; he begged for his unknown friend, who would shortly make his appearance, nothing but permission to show himself, that Miss Dorothea would deign to become acquainted with him and his sentiments.

To this proposal Dorothea had sent no answer. In her silent grief she took no heed of time, and her friends were forced to give her notice, that the day and hour was now come, in which the singular wooer was to make his appearance. Madame von Halden was present as the female friend. A team of English horses drove up, a splendid carriage and servants appeared. Dorothea was in the garden parlour nearly fainting. Brandenstein stepped in, attired as a bridegroom, in the prime of manly beauty.

“ And your friend ? ” inquired the mother.

“ It is only my dear, beloved Dorothea,” replied he, hastening to her, “ from whom I must implore forgiveness for my jest ; I am myself

the American, that domain is at last mine, and nothing is wanting to my happiness but a word from that gentle mouth."

Dorothea bloomed again, looked at him with a tear in her beaming eye, and stretched out her hand to him. "We shall drive directly, my dear friends," said he saluting all present, "to the adjoining estate, which till now belonged to Madame von Halden. I have the marriage license, the house is in festal trim, the minister is waiting."

Only the bridal wreath was fixed in the maiden's hair, then all got into the carriage. The Count embraced his bride, and pressed the first kiss on her lips. "Could I have ventured to hope for such bliss?" said he, with tears: "Was the love of this pure soul to be my lot? The same child to become the joy of my life, whom, years ago, sitting by thy dear father, I rocked on my knees? See, here didst thou take refuge in despair on that tempestuous night. The minister is waiting for us in the same room, where thou didst then confide to

thy friend that confession which pierced me like lightning.”

Dorothea was so happy, so awakened from pain to delight, that she could speak but little. —The whole province resounded with the wealth of the Count, with the wonderful good fortune of the young lady, and all the neighbourhood witnessed this happy marriage.

When Alfred betrothed himself to Sophia, Baron Wilden also announced his union with Miss Erhard. To his friends, who expressed their surprize at it, he replied: “Look you, good folks, solitude and want of pastime make many things possible; besides my bride has several good qualities, and is grown much merrier than she was formerly. She takes extraordinary pains too about my conversion, and that is no easy matter, considering that, in my fat body, my soul lies so much deeper than with other men. I shall now soon be pious too in my way, only take care, that the thing keeps in fashion nicely, that I may not have to go backwards again some of these days, like a crab.”

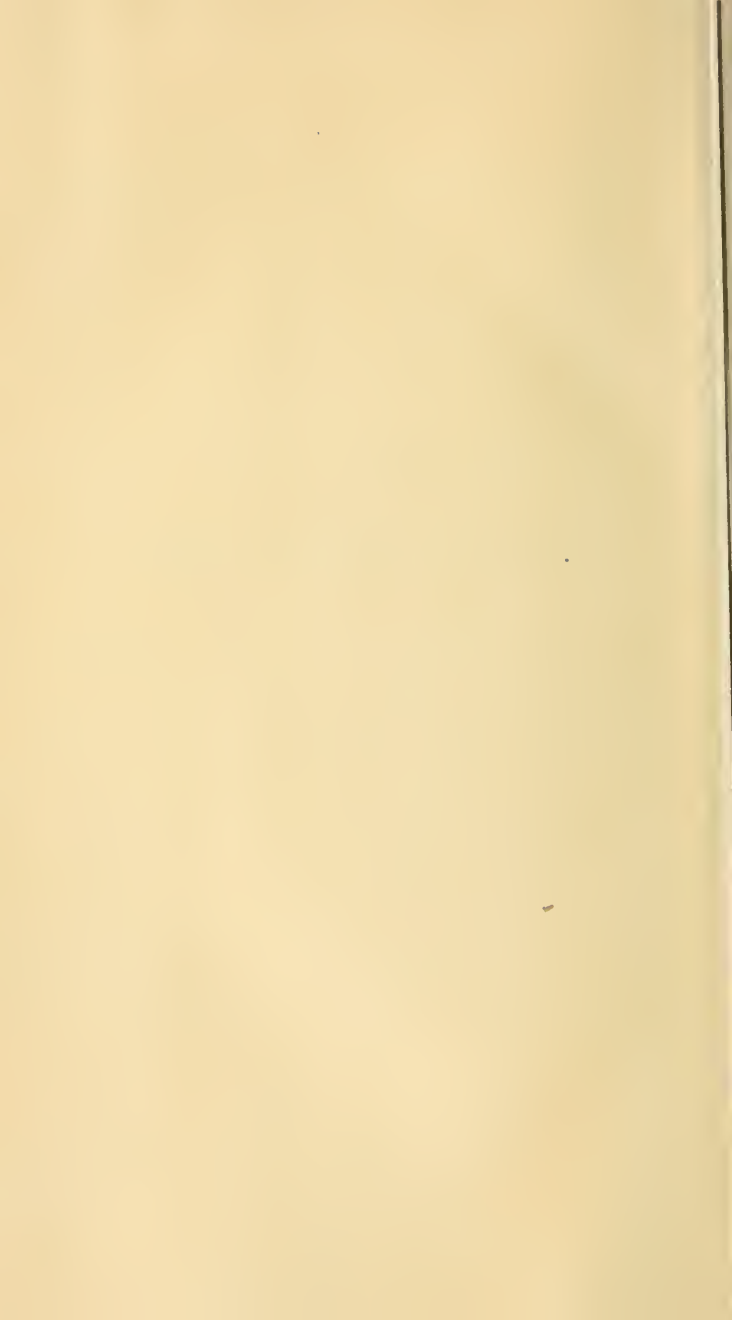
Some time after Baron Wallen and the Baroness likewise thought it better to unite in matrimony, as he could not obtain any of the daughters, and still the intercourse of this family was indispensable to him.

Alfred lived afterwards a great deal in the house of the Count, whose man of business he was; and Brandenstein often recollected with rapture, how destiny had granted it to him, to find in his wife the pearl of great price, so totally neglected by all her acquaintance and her nearest kindred.

THE END.

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